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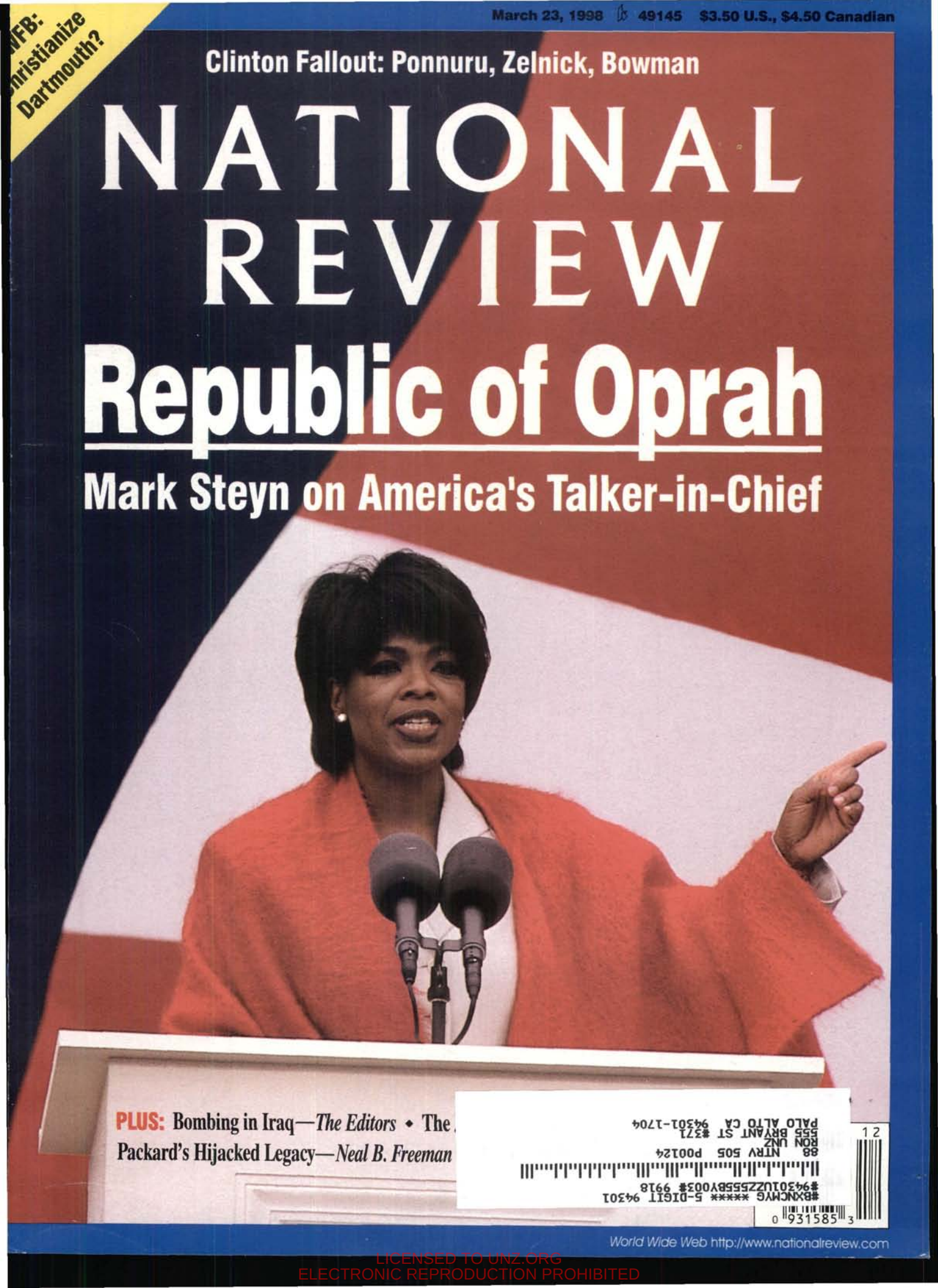
...nristianize Dartmouth?

Clinton Fallout: Ponnuru, Zelnick, Bowman

NATIONAL REVIEW

Republic of Oprah

Mark Steyn on America's Talker-in-Chief



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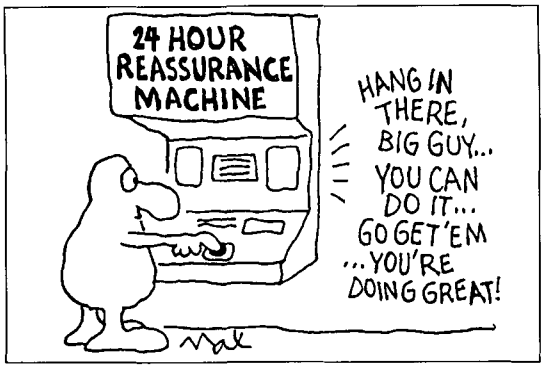

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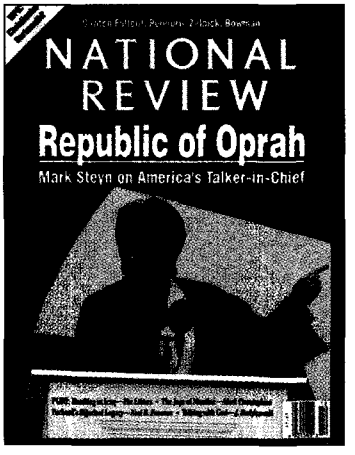

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"Bear could hardly walk. Then, in just a few days, he was his old self again."

SUSAN LLOYD, BEAR'S OWNER
MARLBOROUGH, CONNECTICUT

As a certified therapy dog, Bear has a very important job. Each week, he dispenses good cheer and affection when he visits nursing homes, like the one at Whitney Center in Hamden, Connecticut.

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LETTERS

Limited Prospects

Remember the Republican Revolution of 1994? We at U.S. Term Limits had hoped the "revolution" would gain greater freedom for Americans through, among other things, term limits on Congress. However, John J. Miller ["Terminally Inept?" March 9] argues that conservatives saw term limits merely as a "tool" to "gain an edge in Congress." Many Republican politicians *have* forgotten term limits now that they are in power, along with much of their agenda for bringing the Federal Government under control. But please don't misrepresent those citizens —including most conservatives—who continue to support term limits in their truest form: self-limitation in the tradition of George Washington, not hollow talk of constitutional amendments by career politicians.

Paul Jacob
Executive Director, U.S. Term Limits
Washington, D.C.

Smutty with a Purpose

Wait just a minute. David Klinghoffer describes *South Park* as a sign of our crumbling society ["Dirty Joke," March 9]. As a true-blue conservative, I disagree.

Consider the way *South Park* skewers politically correct claptrap regarding homosexuals, world hunger, Christmas, euthanasia, environmental essay contests, crying-on-demand politicians (are you watching, Mr. President?), and much, much more. The best part, however, is that it proved those who laughed at Bill Clinton's TV-ratings program absolutely right. When ratings come about, shows will become even more outrageous. The networks will no longer have any self-imposed boundaries—they will be able to do whatever they want as long as they stamp it with an "adult" rating.

Roger Abramson
roger.abramson@legislature.state.tn.us

Downsizing Darwin?

While the falsity of Darwinism has never been quite so titillatingly presented as by David Klinghoffer ["Strip Clubs *v.* Darwinism," Feb. 23], his last paragraph represents a sort of theological evolution contrary to the teaching of the Church. Mr. Klinghoffer states: "[God] set our impulses in us, good and evil. If we have the desire to indulge less-than-elevated instincts, the responsibility is ultimately His. If we go ahead and indulge them, it's ours."

God is not the author of evil; we live in a fallen world. The Church teaches that *all* of creation fell as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Desire, at least as the world knows it, is itself a product of the Fall. When viewed in the proper light, impulses, instincts, and indulgences are *all* our responsibility. While views to the contrary may ease one's conscience in regard to voyeurism, they may lead the viewer into a form of eschatological extinction—an eternal cold shower, at best.

Fr. Joseph Huneycutt
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
Fletcher, N.C.

Please see Isaiah 45:6-7: ". . . I am the Lord, and there is none else. . . . I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." Isaiah's Hebrew phrase boreh ra, *"create evil," is unambiguous. However, Scripture is meant to be enigmatic, its deepest meaning unrecoverable without the aid of tradition passed down through the millennia. What you make of any given passage will naturally depend on which tradition you regard as authoritative.* —DK

Mr. Klinghoffer's almost brilliant dispatch of philosophical materialism has, alas, one fatal flaw: Sometimes survival depends on *not* procreating. Many animals—especially mammals—will stop reproducing when conditions are unfavorable, so that they might survive to live it up another day. The unfavorable condition of overcrowding comes to mind. However, even when lacking the will to procreate because of the stress of modern urban crowding, men will still indulge their urges through voyeurism, video rental, and, yes, even having naked women sit on their laps. It would seem, ironically of course, that perversion plays an important Darwinian role in stabilizing human population.

David Austin
Maplewood, N.J.

Armey Armed

Four years ago, I worked overtime to stop President Clinton from herding all Americans into HMOs. Imagine my surprise to read ["The Week," Feb. 23] that I, Dick Armey, now "defend the HMOs" and believe "the dominance of HMOs results from market forces." Since when? I think HMOs are neither evil nor ideal. People should be free to join—and leave—them as they wish. HMOs should be disciplined by consumers in a truly free market, not by Clinton bureaucrats who dream of hitching anti-managed-care sentiment to their dream of socialized medicine. Our ultimate goal, as *NR* rightly observes, must be to shift control to the consumer (who shops for value) and away from the employer (who tends to choose whichever plan is cheapest). To suggest that my resistance to incremental ClintonCare makes me an HMO defender is not only poor reporting; it gives needless aid and comfort to the Left.

Rep. Dick Armey (R., Tex.)
Majority Leader
Washington, D.C.

English Lessons

John J. Miller's "Bilingual Bullies" [Feb. 23] badly misrepresents both the law and the position of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Graduating a non-English-proficient student into an all-English curriculum before he or she has the reading, writing, and comprehension skills (not simply English *speaking* skills) to compete is tantamount to social promotion, benefiting no one. As Education Secretary Richard Riley has said on many occasions, these children *must* learn English to have an equal chance to compete for academic, social, and economic success. OCR does not require or advocate any particular educational approach, including bilingual education.

What Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires, and what OCR looks for, is that districts provide services to ensure the effective participation of students not proficient in English. The Education Department's mission is to promote equal access to education and educational excellence throughout the nation. Our legal obligation is to ensure that *all* students can participate in the entire regular educational program—in English.

Jamienne S. Studley
Acting General Counsel
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C.

Whew, Brain Still Working

Thank you for David Klinghoffer's "Black Madonna" [Feb. 9]. After finishing Toni Morrison's latest work, I feared that despite having been an avid reader for the better part of my seventy-plus years, my ability to comprehend the written word had taken a serious nose dive. I now no longer question my elderly brain and will not give up reading as one of my favorite pastimes.

Roberta M. Krehel
Broadview Heights, Ohio

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that go into every

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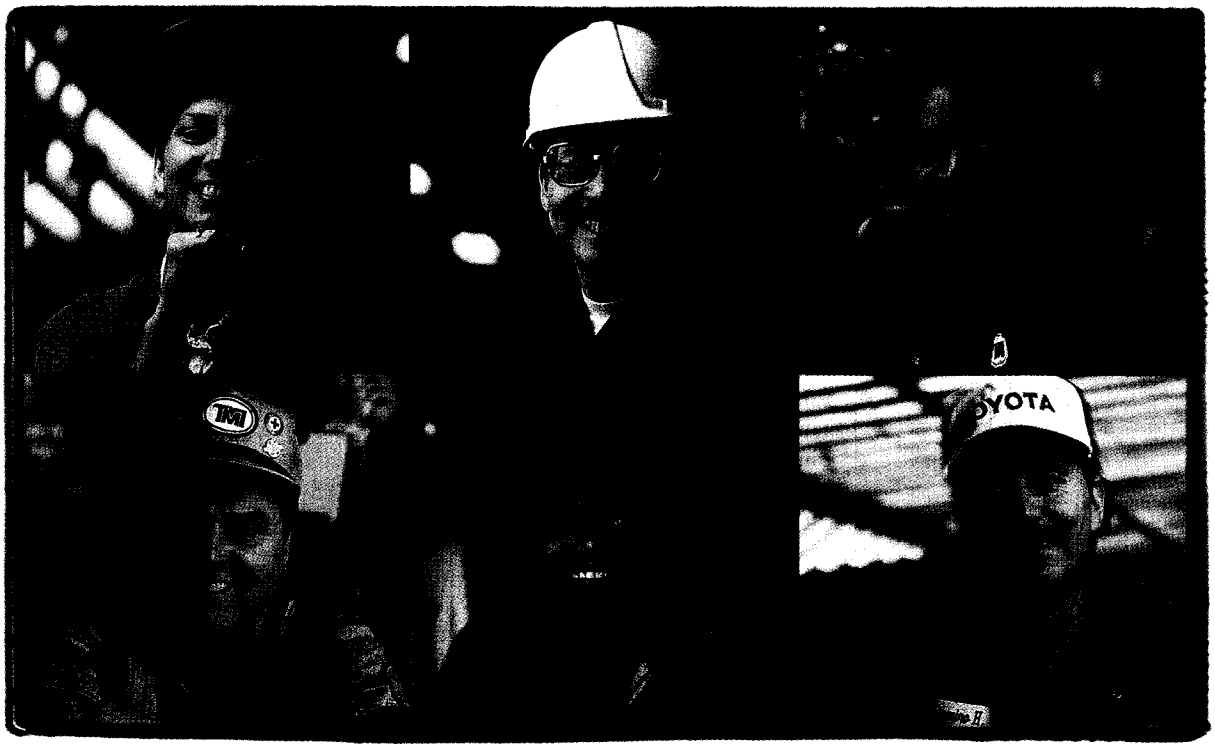

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dodd's Bogey

A FRIEND of mine makes a decent wage on Capitol Hill, but not the six figures of the top-level guys who advise the Speaker on which petting zoos to visit and how to smile in public. If he were on his own, he'd be quite comfortable. But he has a wife and three children, which means a lifestyle of constant money worries.

Lunches are brown-bag. There are no tickets to ballgames or the movies, let alone the Kennedy Center. And there is always the nagging thought that maybe they should go back to the Midwest where the cost of living isn't so high. Nonetheless, when he mentions that his wife stays at home he is always told, "Oh, you're so lucky," as if the arrangement were the result of a bequest.

Enter Sen. Chris Dodd (D., Out-of-Touch). Last issue, NATIONAL REVIEW quoted from a speech in which Sen. Dodd suggested mothers stay at home because they "want to go play golf or go to the club and play cards." If my friend were to tell the senator about his wife, Dodd would presumably respond: "Gee, what's her handicap?"

The remarks have understandably caused an uproar. So, the silver-haired senator—last seen presiding over the DNC as Charlie Trie and John Huang pumped it full of cash (Dodd, of course, knows nothing about that)—is busy ducking for cover.

A Dodd aide wrote *NR* demanding a retraction, complaining among other things that we didn't call to check the story. Just imagine how that conversation might have gone:

"Hi, I'm calling to check if the senator said what he said in his speech."

"No, he did not—notwithstanding comments he may have made to the contrary."

That is essentially what the letter from Dodd's office maintains—such is the press secretary's art. It accuses *NR* of taking the comments out of context, so let's "contextualize" them.

First, Sen. Dodd tells us, "It is one thing to have the choice [to stay at home with your kids], that is a wonderful luxury, but for the overwhelming majority of the 13 million children who are in child-care centers, their parents don't have the choice, they have to be there."

This comment plainly suggests that stay-at-home moms are exercising a luxurious choice rather than acting on a sense of duty toward their kids.

Then: "It is not a question of 'I would like to stay at home, I have another spouse that is earning enough.' It is not a question of 'I want to go play golf or go to the club and play cards.' These are people trying very hard on their own or with their spouse to hold their families together. So the choice doesn't exist for them."

Dodd's aide spins this as praise of stay-at-home moms, when clearly Dodd is complimenting working mothers—and in a way that slights their counterparts at home. It's an insult notable for several reasons.

First, even as a putdown it is absurd. If the senator had stay-at-home moms eating popcorn and watching Oprah that would be one thing. But his next example was probably going to be: "It is not a question of 'I want to have my driver take me in the Bentley in search of Special Reserve Dom Pérignon.'"

Second, it captures Washington's attitude toward mothers perfectly. As a recent article in the *Washington Post Magazine* noted, "Showing up at a Washington social gathering as just a mom is like showing up in your underwear: revealing and chilly."

Third, the economics is exactly backward. In 1993, the median income of married families with kids and the mother at home was about $15,000 *less* than for two-earner couples with kids.

All of this makes Sen. Dodd an ideal standard-bearer for child-care legislation to subsidize moms who leave their kids with strangers all day. It's sure to pass—and sure to make the tax burden on families like my friend's all the heavier.

If Sen. Dodd won't apologize for his remarks, someone should at least apologize for that. —RICHARD LOWRY

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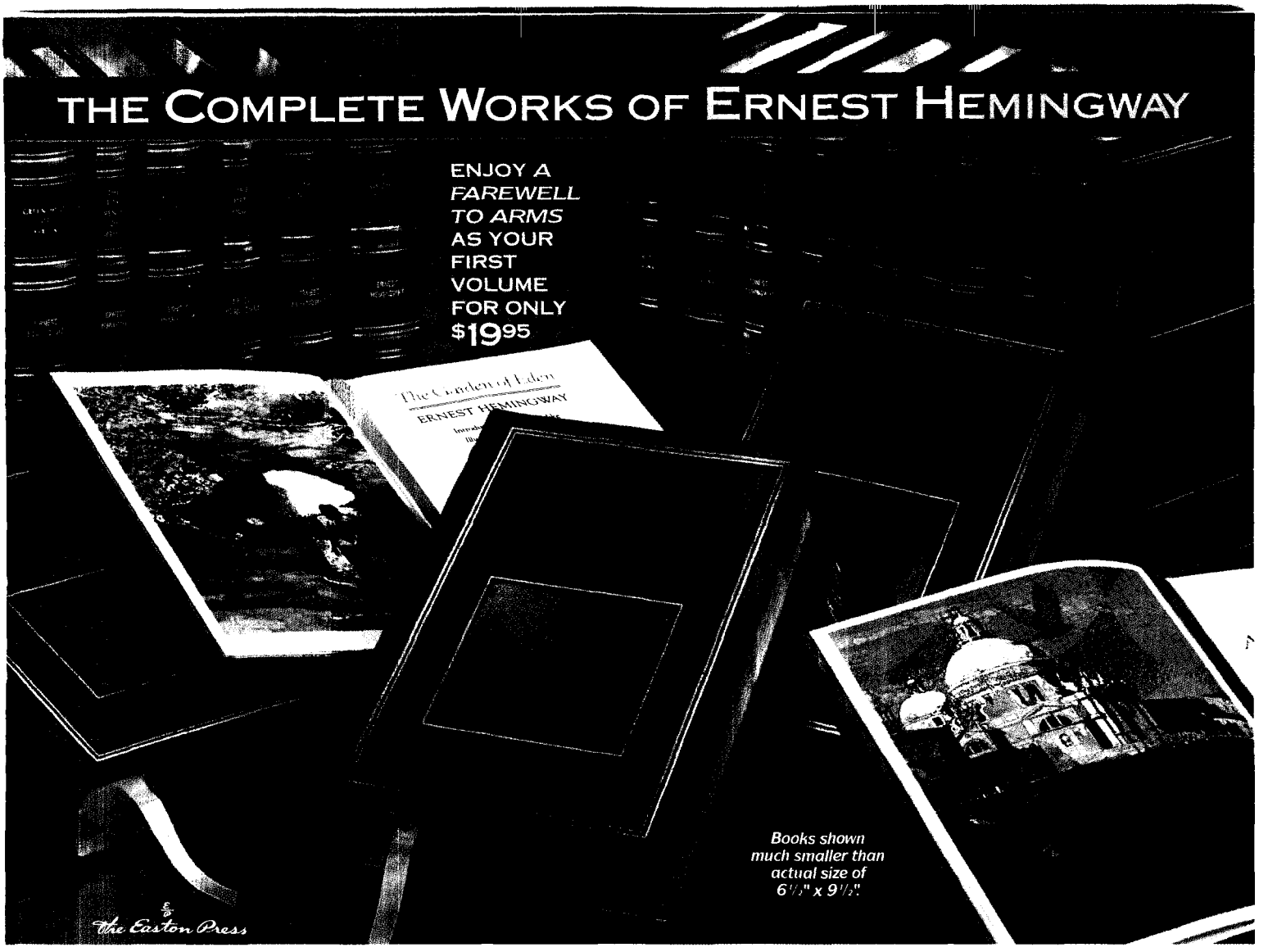

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FOR THE RECORD

■ Five weeks after **Monica Lewinsky** first hit front pages, *National Journal*'s **Michael Kelly** hints at **Clinton** Cabinet resignations, points to Treasury Secretary **Robert Rubin** and Education Secretary **Richard Riley** as "deeply bothered." . . . One local Virginia chapter of National Organization for Women votes unanimously for national NOW leadership to resign, following "the long silence on sexual harassment" charges against Clinton. . . . Six months after Watergate break-in, **Richard Nixon** had 68 per cent approval rating. . . . New gender gap? Clinton approval rating is 54 per cent among men, 49 per cent among women, and 46 per cent among soccer moms. . . . **James Carville** mocks faith of Independent Counsel **Ken Starr**: "He goes down by the Potomac and listens to hymns, as the cleansing water of the Potomac goes by, and we're going to wash all the Sodomites and fornicators out of town." . . . *New York Times* in 1987: **Reagan** Administration "has turned over voluminous records to all bodies investigating the Iran affair and allowed senior Administration officials to waive all claims to executive privilege and testify." . . . **Harris** poll: 51 per cent believe in right-wing conspiracy to remove Clinton from office. **Zogby** poll: Only 32 per cent believe **Vincent Foster** committed suicide.

■ **Saddam** marches on. Ex-State Department official **Larry Johnson**: "The Clinton Administration is engaged in one of the most inept displays of diplomacy that has ever been demonstrated in the history of the United States." . . . One general on Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright**: "She's 'Old Blood and Guts.' Problem is, it's her guts and our blood." . . . Nation of Islam leader **Louis Farrakhan** tours Iraq, announces himself target of U.S. and British spy conspiracy. . . . **Dick Morris** on disastrous Ohio town-hall meeting: "Which of those demonstrators is going to run for President in thirty years?

■ New Hampshire poll: Texas Gov. **George W. Bush** preferred by 23 per cent of voters for GOP nomination in 2000, followed by **Steve Forbes** (17 per cent), **Jack Kemp** (15 per cent), **Lamar Alexander** (11 per cent), **Dan Quayle** (9 per cent). . . . Bush also tops straw poll in Southern Republican Leadership Conference held in Biloxi, Miss., with Rep. **J. C. Watts** (Okla.) favorite for VP. . . . **Newt Gingrich** avoids Georgia GOP's largest fundraiser of year, upset that Forbes is main draw. . . . New York Mayor **Rudy Giuliani** will travel to Michigan in March. . . . California GOP votes to withhold money from candidates who oppose partial-birth-abortion ban. . . . California's likely Republican gubernatorial nominee, Attorney General **Dan Lungren**, asked whether he would rule in or rule out running for President or Vice President in 2000: "Nope." . . . Mayor Moonbeam? **Jerry Brown** runs for top job in Oakland, Calif.

■ State Sen. **Larry Seabrook** (D., N.Y.) on why he may endorse Gov. **George Pataki** (R.) for re-election: "He's almost not running as a Republican. He's taken all the ideas and programs the Democrats have put forward." Seabrook and other Democrats may formally endorse Pataki. . . . N.J. Gov. **Christine Todd Whitman** (R.) changes tune, refuses to "reject out of hand recommendations to increase the income tax she once cut," writes *Newark Star Ledger*. . . . Across the nation, state budgets increase by 5 per cent in 1996–97 and projected 5.5 per cent in 1997–98. . . . State governments have grown faster than Federal Government every year since 1992, despite Republican victories of 1994. . . . Mississippi state Rep. **Bobby Moak** (R., Miss.) offers bill to punish pot smokers by amputating arm or leg. Convicted person and court must agree on "which body part shall be removed."

Matt-Rothco

"This party you're taking my daughter to—there won't be any government officials there, I hope?"

■ Sen. **John McCain** (R., Ariz) condemns "divisive" ballot initiative to ban racial preferences in Arizona. . . . *Wall Street Journal*'s **Al Hunt**: "No one thought **Ted Kennedy** would dominate the next two Congresses [after 1994 re-election]. But he has." . . . American students score near bottom in international education survey. . . . One of every six eligible D.C. children applies for voucher offered by privately funded Washington Scholarship Fund. . . . Fox News poll: more Americans say they would rather have their children raised by a Hollywood star than by a senator. . . . Women's Legal Defense Fund changes name to National Partnership for Women & Families. . . . Conservative internet site www.townhall.com receives 100,000,000th hit.

■ In Philippines 81 candidates seek presidency, including "Princess **Diana** Incarnate." Frontrunner is current VP and confessed "womanizer" **Joseph Estrada**. . . . Huge protest in London over Labour attempts to ban foxhunting. . . . Japanese environmental group claims delegates to Kyoto global-warming conference emitted 2,559 tons of carbon dioxide, about half the annual emissions of small Pacific island Kiribati. . . . Red Army Day in Moscow attracts several thousand marchers, most of them nostalgic Communists. . . . "We could hardly have operated during the Communist era, when the very concept of nobility was officially targeted for destruction," says founder of Russian etiquette school.

■ American Demographics reports higher education linked to less sexual activity. Johns Hopkins study finds people with advanced degrees suffer from more headaches. Statistical Assessment Service connects dots: " 'I have a headache' is transformed from a personal rebuff to an epidemiological imperative."

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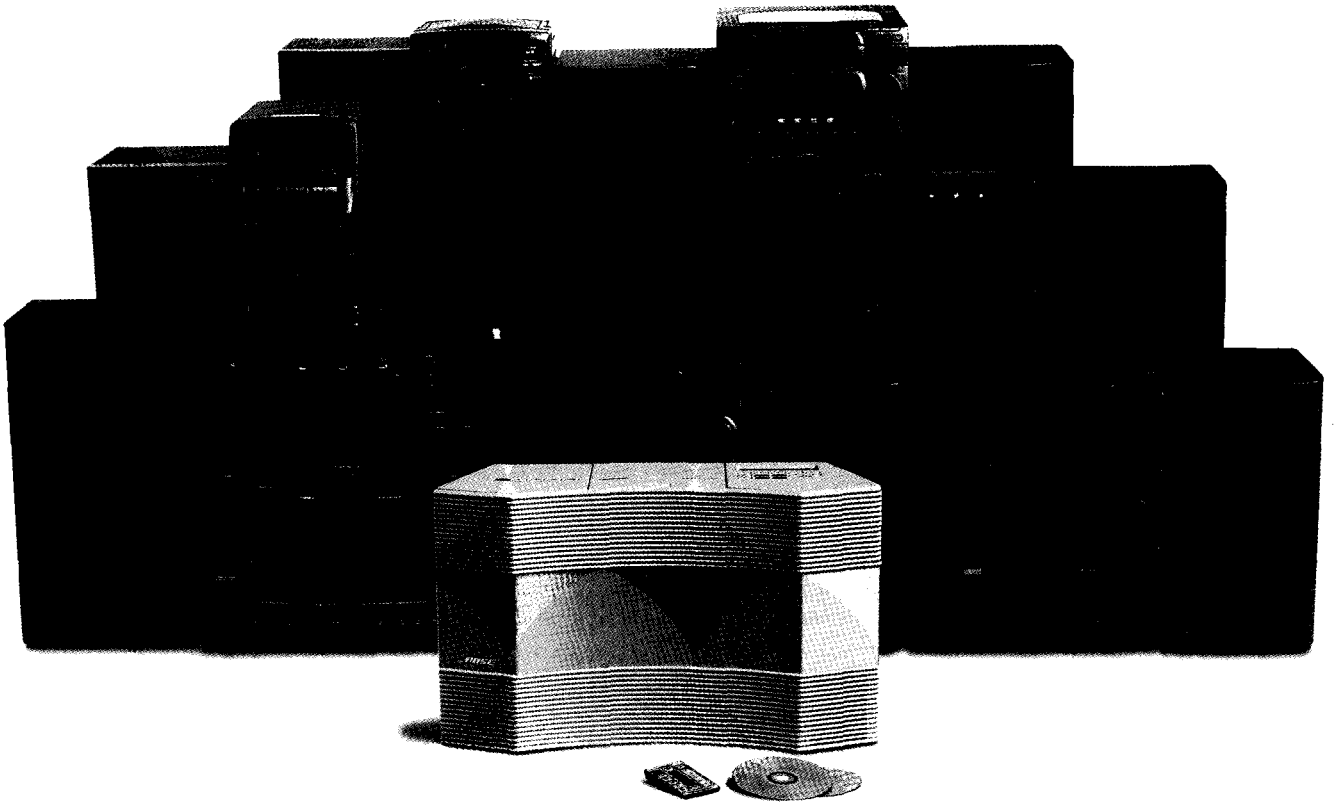

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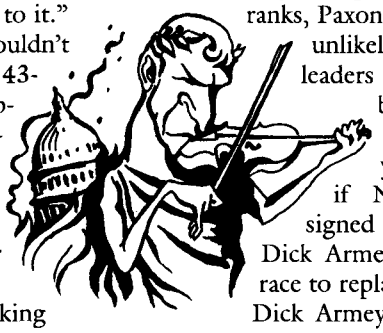
BREAD & CIRCUSES

Newt's Successor?

WASHINGTON met the stunning announcement by Rep. Bill Paxon (R., N.Y.) that he would resign his seat at the end of the year with disbelief. His apparently sincere desire to spend more time with his wife and small daughter was dismissed as incredible by colleagues with different priorities. "I have young kids too," one Member of Congress declared. "There must be more more to it."



Paxon's colleagues couldn't fathom that the talented 43-year-old, who has held public office ever since he graduated from college, would leave his safe House seat and vow never to run for office again, "not even for dog warden."

Before he foreswore picking up strays, Paxon had been sounding out other disaffected Members about making a run for the House leadership. Some of them thought he could be the next Speaker of the House. But Paxon elected instead to preside over his own home, and so sheepish fellow parents and cynical pros dream up conspiracy theories to explain his departure.

Paxon's resignation has also set off a Capitol Hill parlor game of figuring out who might succeed Newt Gingrich (R., Ga.). Facing a term limit on his tenure as Speaker (he has only until 2002), Gingrich is expected to resign in 1999 to run for President. In preparation, everyone expected Paxon to challenge Dick Armey (R., Tex.) for Majority Leader so as to become Gingrich's heir apparent.

Although it is unclear whether Paxon could have beaten Armey, his political skills and personal popularity made him the only plausible challenger to the Majority Leader. A conservative well liked by moderates, Paxon is credited with playing a key role in winning the House majority as head of the GOP's campaign committee in 1994. He became a hero to rebels in the sophomore class when he resigned his leadership post following last summer's failed coup against the Speaker.

It now seems that Paxon has truly left the political game and taken all the GOP bench strength with him. Shortly after Paxon's announcement, one GOP Member reflected the widely held view about potential challengers to the current leadership: "The list began and ended with Bill Paxon."

Within 24 hours, a new list was in the making. Despite dissension in the ranks, Paxon's departure makes it unlikely that incumbent leaders will be challenged before the next Congress convenes a year from now. But if Newt Gingrich resigned the Speakership, Dick Armey would still face a race to replace him.

Dick Armey's support has been weakened by the overall disaffection with the leadership. In addition, some of the younger Members are convinced that he unfairly blamed Paxon for the coup attempt, and conservatives are disappointed that his leadership responsibilities have inhibited him from promoting their causes. Armey's defenders point out that he is resuming an aggressive policy role within the leadership, displaying his obvious strength on the production end of public policy. But doubts remain about his effectiveness as a salesman. "You can't put Armey on TV every Sunday," said one Member, in a frequently heard complaint.

However, there is growing concern that the contenders' subterranean efforts to position themselves for the battle to succeed Gingrich will be a divisive distraction throughout this year. At least one Member's intention to run for Speaker is already above ground.

When Appropriations Committee chairman Bob Livingston (R., La.), a Gingrich loyalist, decided not to retire (and give David Duke a shot at his seat), he expressed his interest in succeeding Gingrich. Although Livingston has had more than a few angry confrontations with his colleagues, including younger conservatives opposed to higher spending, at least one of the sophomore rebels is inclined to grant the conservative Louisianan an amnesty for his tenure overseeing appropriators. "He's stuck working with a bunch of people who came to Washington to spend money," explains Rep. Joe Scarborough (R., Fla.).

Another Member mentioned as possible Speaker material is Chris Cox (R., Calif.), chairman of the GOP Policy Committee and a favorite of conservatives outside Congress. Cox discourages talk of a promotion, but some members like the idea of having his smarts at the top of the conference. Cox is a well-trained lawyer and, as one admiring Member puts it, "not accident-prone, like other members of the leadership." But there are worries that Cox can get too caught up with the complexities of policy. "I got a lukewarm response [when I floated Cox]," the Member says, "but there's a changing environment and with a change in style, Cox has the raw material to move up."

TOM DeLay (R., Tex.), currently in the number-three leadership slot as Majority Whip, was encouraging Paxon to challenge Armey. DeLay has had a falling out with his fellow Texan, a feud kept alive by their warring staffs. Now DeLay could decide to go for the Speakership himself in order to prevent Armey's ascent. DeLay remains popular with the GOP conference, and he has maintained some independence from the leadership owing to his strained relations with Gingrich. But there are questions about whether he has the ability to serve as "the face of the GOP."

John Boehner (R., Ohio) and Jennifer Dunn (R., Wash.) are both thought to have ambitions to move up in the leadership, but Members don't believe that either is strong enough to run for Speaker.

The anticipation of a post-Newt world for the House GOP has led to all of this premature handicapping—and divisive intrigue—even as recent events remind us of how quickly the political landscape can change. A little over a year ago, Bill Paxon was enthusiastically rounding up support for the embattled Speaker, who, just months later, tossed Paxon from his team.

Bill Paxon enjoyed his quality time with the adults in the House so little, it's no wonder that he's opting for some quantity time with a toddler.

—KATE O'BEIRNE

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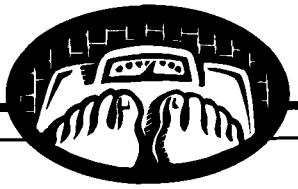

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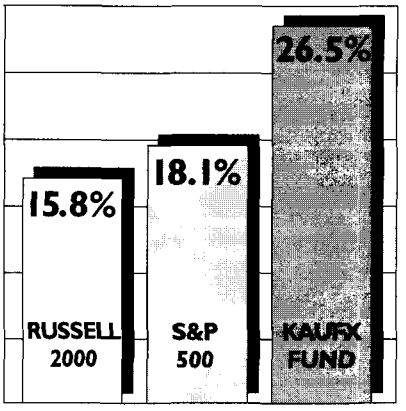

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THE WEEK

■ When all is said and done, the only person to go to jail will probably be Ken Starr.

■ The *National Law Journal* reports that "the Clintons' legal bills now exceed $8 million—and counting." This, by approximately $8 million, sets the record for presidential legal bills. But who's counting?

■ Other records that have toppled before the Clinton juggernaut: Most legal defense funds (2). (No other President has either had or needed even one.) Most legal defense funds to receive $700,000 in an unmarked paper bag (1). Most aides who also need super attorneys (all of them). Most Cabinet members to be indicted (all of them, eventually). Most lawyers to accompany one presidential assistant to a grand-jury session, even though they are not permitted in the room (10, with Bruce Lindsey).

■ At press time the House was about to vote on whether to put Puerto Rico on a fast track to statehood. Supporters have whipped up fears among Puerto Ricans that lack of statehood endangers their citizenship and constitutional rights, as if Congress were about to outlaw Mass on the island. They have stifled discussion of untoward facts like the island's 28 per cent unemployment rate and 43 per cent illegitimacy rate. And, of course, they have charged critics with racism. Carlos Romero-Barceló, Puerto Rico's delegate to Congress and author of *Statehood Is for the Poor*, called Jorge Amselle "contemptible" and "prejudiced" for raising objections (*NR*, Oct. 27, 1997). For insisting that official English be a condition of statehood, Rep. Gerald Solomon (R., N.Y.) was labeled a "Nazi" on the floor of the Puerto Rican House by its Majority Leader. All these tactics are drawn straight from the identity-politics playbook—except this time, its practitioners are mostly Republicans, trawling for Hispanic votes. In fact, statehood could well consign the Republicans to minority status in Congress. Sen. Paul Coverdell (R., Ga.) is willing to filibuster against the bill, but the best bet for its opponents is to amend it to require that statehood get more than 80 per cent support on the island before going forward, as was the case in Alaska and Hawaii. But their pro-statehood forces didn't have multi-million-dollar lobbying campaigns in Washington.

■ The second hottest investigation in Washington is the House Education and Workforce Subcommittee's inquiry into the Teamsters' corrupt leadership elections in 1996. Committee Democrats' first line of defense has been to smear the two seasoned prosecutors hired by Rep. Peter Hoekstra (R., Mich.) to direct the probe. The husband-and-wife team of Joseph diGenova and Victoria Toensing have made scores of TV appearances to comment on the Lewinsky scandal, which Democrats complain have taken valuable time away from the Teamster investigation. In fact, Democrats worry that the two Republicans take valuable soundbite time away from all the defense attorneys who want Starr out. The real obstacle to the probe has been stalling and obstruction by the union. Hoekstra has now issued subpoenas for Teamster records and Ron Carey's own campaign records, which the near-bankrupt union has pledged to fight in court. If Democrats wanted to speed the inquiry, they would urge the union to comply. Instead, they are busy "investigating" GOP investigators. And thanks to the generosity of Rep. William Thomas (R., Calif.), Chairman of the House Oversight Committee, the Democrats have the use of a full third of the subcommittee's investigatory budget to attack GOP staff.

■ The Independent Counsel statute is the only way to enforce accountability on the Executive Branch. *Ah, well, never mind.* Sexual-harassment law is necessary protection for vulnerable women at work. *Second thought.* The personal is political. *Um, maybe not.* The role of reporters is to root out corruption in the highest reaches of government. *Now that you mention it.* All around us the liberal world view is collapsing, brought low by the exigencies of defending Bill Clinton. How else to explain Frank Rich writing that Robert Redford now regrets making *All the President's Men*, because he may have turned a whole generation of reporters on to journalism for "the wrong reasons"? Even Watergate is starting to look like a mistake. All this backtracking would be understandable if it were in the service of some high principle, instead of merely keeping Dogpatch in the White House. But, then again,

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presidential power and its abuse are beginning to look better and better. And about executive privilege . . .

■ One factoid morphing out of the generally excellent PBS documentary on Ronald Reagan is the notion that the 1981 attempt on his life made him slow-witted, years before Alzheimer's. On camera, biographer Edmund Morris says that the shooting began "a very, very slow and steady mental and physical decline." On the *New York Times* editorial page, this becomes Morris's "discovery . . . that the President's capabilities slipped steadily from the time he was shot . . ." Note the elision: *stead(il)y* remains, while *very, very slow* disappears. On some levels, no doubt, Morris's original judgment is correct: what seventy-year-old man could take a bullet without feeling it? But let the record show that the post-shooting Reagan engineered a seven-year boom, and a victory in a world war, achieved without Stalingrads or Verduns. Reagan's high spirits after the shooting—"Honey, I forgot to duck"—also lanced America's preoccupation with its own sickness, engendered by the murders of the Kennedys and Martin Luther King. Any decline Ronald Reagan suffered did not prevent him from doing his duty to the country he loved, and which loved him for eight splendid years.

■ Social-conservative leader Gary Bauer is running ads against partial-birth abortion in Santa Barbara, Calif., where the issue divides the candidates in a special election for a House seat. So the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League is countering with ads against—Gary Bauer. Bauer has a "hidden agenda," one ad claims: he "wants to eliminate the Department of Education." He "opposes programs to protect children from AIDS" (i.e., condoms in the classroom). Bauer has proclaimed these positions proudly. It's NARAL that seems to have something to hide: this ad, like the ones NARAL ran during the State of the Union address, never mentions the word abortion. Abortion has become the right that dare not speak its name.

■ In Washington, history repeats itself, but never as tragedy, only as farce over and over again. Witness campaign-finance reform, which is dead yet again after supporters failed to break a filibuster in the Senate. The animating idea behind the McCain–Feingold bill is that there is too much political discourse funded by too many different interest groups. So, McCain–Feingold proposes a tangle of new regulations that would ban soft-money donations to political parties and discourage corporations—including issue-advocacy groups—and unions from running ads intended to influence elections, especially within 60 days of the election. But political parties flush with cash are a healthy thing in a democracy, and there is no more important time for political ads to run than immediately before an election. This bill deserves every death it suffers. As it happens, its defeat in the Senate may only weaken resistance to passing some version of it in the House. On to the next farce.

■ Four issues ago, Maggie Gallagher warned us about the prevalence of ear infections among children in day care ("Day Careless," Jan. 26). It turns out that the dangers extend to political careers. Rep. Bill Paxon (R., N.Y.) is quitting, in part because he can no longer bear sending his 21-month-old daughter, Susan Ruby, to the House day-care center, where she repeatedly picks up ear infections. Officials of the House center say it's among the best child-care centers you'll find—our point exactly.

■ Oregonians could soon see their tax dollars funding physician-assisted suicide. A state panel voted 10 to 1 to add lethal doses of prescription drugs to the list of "medical services" covered by the state's Medicaid program. In a 1994 ballot initiative, voters made Oregon the first state to legalize physician-assisted suicide. Now physician-assisted suicide has been designated a "comfort care" benefit under the Oregon Health Plan. Wesley Smith, legal counsel for the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, says: "Medicaid rations health care in Oregon, but if this rationing leads to people choosing assisted suicide, Medicaid will pay for it."

■ The strongest-ever showing of the Bharatia Janata Party (BJP) in the Indian elections demonstrated the power of Hindu nationalism—the party's defining plank. It also demonstrated the voters' weariness with socialism and corruption—a sentiment to which the BJP also appealed. The once-dominant Congress Party owed its surprisingly strong second-place finish to the charisma of Sonia Gandhi, the Italian Catholic widow of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, which highlights another fact about India: that it is a true empire, a collection of diverse peoples (imagine a foreigner being elected to the top spot in a nation-state). A lesson in prudence to the consolidationist ambitions of the BJP—if it is willing to learn.

■ The concept of animals-as-people and people-as-animals advanced a few feet, or rather paws, in San Francisco, where a new ASPCA pet-adoption center opened that would make some city-dwellers jealous. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the facility includes "individually appointed apartments" for the dog and cat residents, "complete with TVs . . . , Persian rugs, and original art on the walls. . . . The outside of each apartment is faced in Spanish stucco and Italian tile and designed to mimic a different local area: the Mission District, Russian Hill, Twin Peaks." Explains the ASPCA's Richard Avanzino, "You wouldn't put a family member in a cage." Nor would you set a newspaper under a family member when he relieves himself, or toss him a chew-toy for learning to heel, but never mind.

■ One of the reasons we love sports is that they move refreshingly away from "opinion" in the direction of "fact." We know how many home runs Babe Ruth hit in 1927 and we know the batting averages of Ty Cobb and Ted Williams. Thus the dismay when the injured University of

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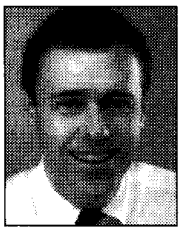
Ex-Navy engineer puts armor-piercing material on a driver. Outguns steel and titanium on distance.



PGA professionals outhit their titanium drivers by 25 and 50 yards

YALESVILLE, CT – And you thought steel and titanium were tough. Well, steel and titanium can't penetrate an armor-plated tank or sink a warship. To pierce their defenses the military had to make something so powerful it had to keep it secret... so powerful that once it was declassified, some innovative company would surely apply it to the face of a golf club to add distance.

One has and it doesn't bode well for golf's current state-of-the-art metal, titanium. A well-known professional outhit his own titanium driver with the new club by 25 yards. Another Tour professional outhit his titanium driver by almost 50 yards!

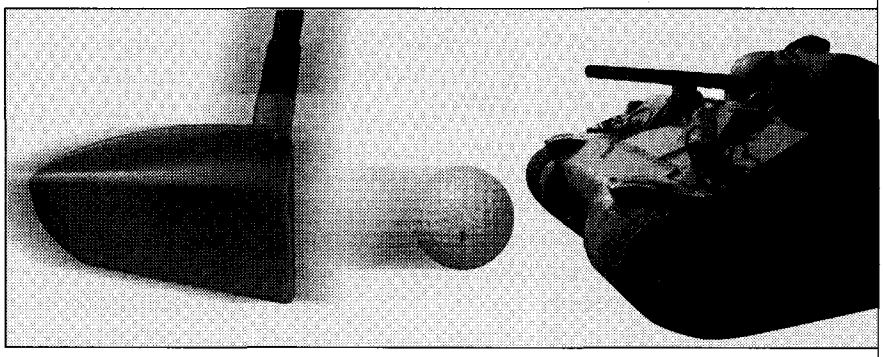
The new driver is the creation of a former Naval Ordnance engineer who used to apply the material to the tips of torpedoes, and a small golf company in Connecticut. Together, they have adapted it to the hitting surface of a steel driver. They say

"The harder it's hit, the farther it goes."

their adaptation is proprietary and a patent has been applied for.

All the company will say is that the new metal is a sort of ceramic titanium, ceramic for hardness and titanium for strength and lightness. The material – called CT-20 – is twice as hard as steel and 70% harder than titanium. It whacks a ball with such force that at club-head speeds of 120 MPH – the level of longball champs – the new club split the cover on some balls.

CT-20 also increases a golfer's accuracy by holding the ball on the face of the club four times longer than steel and titanium. This makes off-center shots far less likely to hook or slice, and allows a good golfer to draw and fade the ball with more control. I watched a top Tour professional test the club at a PGA Tournament. Here's what he told me.



Once-secret CT-20 is used on shells to penetrate tanks and warships, and on spacecraft to withstand heat on re-entry. It is twice as hard as steel, 70% harder than titanium.

"I'm hitting the ball 30 yards past my driver and controlling it like a five-iron. You see all my competitors smiling at me? That's not admiration. It's worry."

The company's Research Director explained the club this way...

"It's basic physics. The harder you hit a ball, the farther it goes, and Condor® Armor-Pierce (the club's name) clobbers a ball like a battering ram. It not only launches it farther down range than any thing else on the market, its CT-20 face reduces a ball's normal spin rate. A lower spin rate keeps the ball flying longer and at a lower trajectory for a longer roll.

"Condor Armor-Pierce also reduces *abnormal* spins that cause off-center shots to hook and slice. That's why he's outhitting his titanium driver by 30 yards and controlling 300-yards shots like a five-iron. It's a pleasure to watch, isn't it?

"You know who he is? (I said I did.) He loves the club. I wish he weren't tied up with a big company. He would shoot in the 50's with the Condor Armor-Pierce. Imagine that on TV. Titanium drivers would be history before he changed shoes, especially at Condor Armor-Pierce's price."

The once-secret CT-20 is backed up by a stainless steel head the same size as a titanium driver (250 cc's) for maximum forgiveness. To maximize clubhead speed it comes with a 45-inch graphite shaft, or a new big butt Turbo/Tip™ graphite shaft with extra weight in the tip.

You can test the Condor Armor-Pierce for 30 days by calling **1-800-285-3900** any time or day or faxing 1-203-284-1623. Or you can send your name, address and check (or cc number and expiration date) to NGC Golf **(Dept. TC-90)**, 60 Church St., Yalesville, CT 06492. The club cost only $129.00 (a fraction of the cost of titanium clubs) and you can add the 3 and 5-woods for only $109.00 each. Add $20.00 to these prices for the new Turbo/Tip (big butt) shaft. Shipping is only $10.00 no matter how large your order. Specify regular or stiff flex, men's or ladies', when you order. Right-handed only. There's a 30-day money back guarantee, if the clubs are returned undamaged.

Oh, yes. If you swing at 120 MPH, take some extra balls.

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Connecticut basketball star Nykesha Sales, one point short of the school record, was allowed to shoot an uncontested basket and become the new record holder. Immediately, the record was fictionalized. All those involved—coaches, players, league officials—thought Miss Sales *deserved* the record, and so they gave it to her, breaking the rules of the sport. The good news is that this example of affirmative action met with widespread condemnation. Sports, at least, we still take seriously.

■ The biggest Capitol Hill story of the last two years was broken not by the networks or major dailies, but by a young journalist who had taken the time to get to know the Republican sophomore class and who was willing to do the hard work of real reporting. His name was Sandy Hume. From his perch at the small paper *The Hill*, he scooped the world on the House coup against Newt Gingrich. It seemed the first of many scoops in his career. Hume went on to write for *The New Republic*, *George*, *Texas Monthly*, and, once, *NR*—a lively and well-informed piece on Rep. Bud Shuster (R., Pa.). At age 28, he took his own life. It is a tragic loss for his family, for his friends, and for journalism. RIP.

■ A New Jersey court reinstated a gay Scoutmaster, on the grounds that the Boy Scouts are a public accommodation like a hotel or a restaurant, and hence forbidden to discriminate. But what restaurant requires its patrons to be brave, clean, and reverent?

■ South Africa appears to be catching up with the politically correct world very quickly. The Johannesburg zoo this week held a barbecue to "create an awareness of the importance of insects," serving mopani worm burgers (with a lot of garlic to cover up the taste), locusts, and chocolate-covered fried termites.

■ People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals sent a letter to our country's religious leaders advising that Jesus was a vegetarian and suggesting that they counsel their flocks to follow His example. If this gets out of control, we know a place that PETA overlooked where you can get fried termites and mopani worm burgers.

Starr-Struck

POOR Nixon. All he had was Haldeman, Liddy, and a few Cubans. If he had had the Clinton attack team, he might have lasted . . . nine more months.

To give credit where credit is due, the Clintonites in action are awesome, like a herd of bison before the railroad cut the plains. At the end of February, Vernon Jordan, headhunter for interns, decided to look out for himself; the White House denied using private investigators, just before it was proved that they do use them; the Clinton legal team, by raising the issue of executive privilege, raised the ghosts of Watergate; former Arkansas governor Jim Guy Tucker decided to sing; some Clintonite solemnly suggested that the President and Monica Lewinsky had only kissed—and yet the main stories were the sufferings of Sidney Blumenthal, and the rashness of Kenneth Starr.

Turn off the TV, purge the air of Clintonian spooks and sprites, and the real story of the last two weeks emerges.

Vernon Jordan. The man who got Monica Lewinsky a job at Revlon leaked word that President Clinton had told him that there was no relationship with her. Could be the sleek D.C. insider is bolstering Clinton's story; could also be that Jordan is shifting blame from himself (*I* didn't suborn perjury; *I* knew only what I was told). Jordan wants to play golf with the next four Presidents, not go to jail for this one. "I know what loyalty is," Jordan reportedly said, "and I'm not a fool."

Private investigators. Press Secretary Michael McCurry said reports that the White House had hired gumshoes to dig up dirt on Starr's staff were "blatant lies." A day later, however, Terry Lenzner, former Watergate attorney and current gumshoe, told the *Washington Post* that he had been working for Clinton's lawyers. Lenzner, a true Sam Spade, would not say what interested his clients. Reporters have been deluged with faxes alleging long-ago professional missteps by Starr's underlings. But since those are matters of public record, Lenzner and his ilk are probably digging for dirtier dirt.

Executive privilege. Longtime Clinton loyalists Bruce Lindsey and Sidney Blumenthal cited this doctrine, in keeping mum during appearances before the grand jury. The argument is fanciful: all precedents, going back to Watergate, restrict executive privilege to discussion of affairs of state, not legal affairs. This is purely a maneuver to buy time—ideally, until after the November elections.

Jim Guy Tucker. Not every Arkansas politician was involved in Whitewater—just those with some connection to Bill Clinton. Clinton's successor in the statehouse met Clinton in the White House in 1993, days before a key criminal referral of Arkansas banking misdeeds to the Justice Department. Tucker has agreed to plead guilty to fraud, in return for telling what they discussed.

In the Clinton Bunker

Albright still bobs like a boxer.
Cohen seeks gastric relief.
Berger, who bombed as an anchor,
Blessedly kept remarks brief.
Kofi Annan was indulgent,
Vouching for Saddam Hussein,
Who, with a bow to Houdini,
Flaunted his legerdemain.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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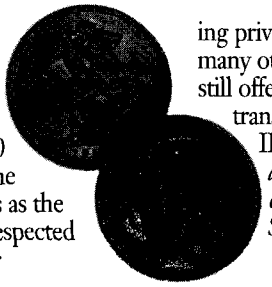

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For more than a century, the intelligence community has used Sovereigns as emergency money for agents operating in every nation — as popularized by Ian Fleming in his James Bond novels.

Allied air crews in World War II carried Sovereigns as a standard part of their survival kits, in case they were shot behind enemy lines. Even the American government recognizes the perceived value of Sovereigns: During Desert Storm, American pilots carried these historic gold coins as their emergency money, because Sovereigns are more widely known and valued in the Middle East than any other gold coin, new or old.

Absolute Privacy

If you value your privacy — an important asset in today's world — then the British Sovereign could prove to be one of your most important investment tools.

You see, according to Internal Revenue Service Revenue Procedure 92-103, most gold coins or bars must be reported on Form 1099-B when sold. There is nothing private about that. However, unlike many other gold bullion coins, Sovereigns still offer you absolute *privacy* in your transaction. Under current tax law and IRS regulation interpretations, *there are no reporting requirements whatsoever when you buy or sell British Sovereign gold pieces.*

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As an historic, collectible gold coin, the Sovereign boasts another very important advantage over other gold bullion coins: It is not subject to any gold confiscation law passed in U.S. history, due to its status as a collector piece.

The infamous Executive Order 6102, issued by Franklin Roosevelt on April 5, 1933, confiscated the gold holdings of American citizens. But Section 2(b) of this order specifically excluded collector coins.

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Each 22-karat British Sovereign contains the equivalent of .2354 troy ounces of pure gold, and you can get them for as low as 18% above their gold value from Jefferson Coin & Bullion.

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A Unique Source Of Exceptional Sovereigns

There is a compelling argument to be made that old British Sovereigns are the finest physical gold bullion investment available. No other option offers the same degree of privacy, protection from confiscation, affordability, liquidity and upside potential. (Although the British Royal Mint began minting limited edition Sovereigns once again in 1957, investors should only purchase the historic old gold pieces struck in 1932 and earlier.)

But recognizing this fact is only part of the battle. An investor still must find quality coins at fair prices.

This problem was recently solved when we located two sources for very high quality Sovereigns from Europe. As a result, we can offer top quality Sovereigns at prices that will be hard to beat. In fact, we can offer limited quantities of higher grade Brilliant Uncirculated British Sovereigns — each carefully selected for quality and eye-appeal by our highly qualified numismatic staff — for only a dollar more than lower grade *circulated* coins.

Investors should act quickly for two reasons:

First, this is an excellent opportunity to own quality gold near a cyclical low in both price and premium.

Second, the supply of our uncirculated British Sovereigns is limited. While lower grade circulated specimens should continue to be available, the Brilliant Uncirculated examples may shortly prove much more difficult to acquire.

For these reasons, we strongly urge immediate purchase of Brilliant Uncirculated Sovereigns. The prices below will change with fluctuations in the price of gold.

If you want solid gold security and profit potential that bullion can't match, you should call Jefferson Coin & Bullion at **(800-593-2584)** immediately.

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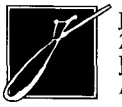

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Maria Hsia, Laundress

In the nunnery, where her
Maytags made Bill Clinton purr,
Campaign cash turned snowy white.
Al Gore, once an acolyte
(Funny nun, he), tends to turn
Snow white, also. Live and learn.

—W. H. von Dreele

You must remember this,/A kiss is still a kiss. We saw *Tobacco Road* meet *The Age of Innocence* when CBS reported that the White House was thinking of claiming that Mr. Clinton had only kissed Monica Lewinsky. Well, if that's what happened, why didn't he say so a month ago? And is it standard procedure for the President to kiss interns? Just as it is standard procedure, apparently, for him to discuss with Vernon Jordan whether he and his interns had sexual relationships.

Blumenthal Triumphans. White House aide Sidney Blumenthal, solemn and ridiculous by turns, is not a popular figure in Washington. His former colleagues in the press loathe his airs; his new colleagues at the White House call him G.K., as in "grassy knoll," in tribute to his conspiracy-theorizing. But one query from the Independent Counsel about what journalists he may have talked to made him a martyr to press freedom. Enjoy the halo, Mr. Blumenthal—and make sure you didn't talk to anyone about Mr. Lenzner (see above).

Kenneth Starr. By now, Mr. Starr might as well change his middle name to Out-of-Control. Which raises the questions: Is he? Should he therefore step down?

The answers are: Not in any serious way; and, Of course not. Mr. Starr is pursuing a quest against a rabid and dishonest gang. He will make a mistake here and there. He might as well carry on; his reputation cannot get any worse. His conduct has not been untoward, or the President, who can ask the Attorney General to fire him at any time, would have seized the pretext to do so. Consider, however, what the Clinton team has to work with: allies leaving a listing ship; ruses that buy time, not relief; spinning and snooping. Measured by that standard, the Independent Counsel's position looks pretty good.

Keep the focus, as always, on the President. He is the leader of the free world, the keeper of the bully pulpit, the man whose face will go on all the historical placemats with Washington, and Lincoln, and Franklin Pierce. He is as shameless as his conduct is shameful—a man who cannot keep his hands off 21-year-old employees, yet who dispatches flunkies to call other men "out of control." He is why we have this sordid political, financial, legal, and sexual mess. Unless we look him in the face, the mess will only be covered over, never cleaned.

Saddam's Sweet Deal

PRESIDENT Clinton's policy on Iraq seems to have been modeled on the military tactics of the noble Duke of York, who, it will be recalled, marched his men "to the top of the hill/And he marched them down again." The men in this case have not quite been marched down. They are staying put for the moment, in case Saddam Hussein violates the agreement so egregiously that even the French notice. The "severest consequences," according to the latest UN Security Council resolution, will then ensue. But what consequences precisely? The Clinton Administration was not able to answer that question the first time around, and it has not come up with a better answer since.

For the moment, however, the agreement signed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz is in place. Let us not mince words: It is the product of weakness and incompetence; it is a victory for Saddam Hussein and a rebuff to the United States; and in the long term, it threatens the region with weapons of mass destruction wielded by a war criminal. The accord purports to require "immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access" by UN inspectors. But that access was already guaranteed by the 1991 cease-fire. What is new is that Iraq's "sovereignty," "dignity," "national security," and "territorial integrity" are to be respected—clauses that Iraq will not fail to invoke the next time it wishes to obstruct. The UN inspectors—hitherto a team of incorruptible technical specialists—will now be accompanied by "senior diplomats" whenever so-called "presidential sites" (i.e., the secret compounds Saddam doesn't want inspected too closely) are to be examined. In other words, the inspectors are to be restrained by chaperones sensitive to diplomatic niceties. And who will supply these duennas—China? Russia? France? In addition, Saddam has had four months to accelerate his chemical, biological, and missile programs as well as to perfect his methods of concealment. This lost ground cannot be recovered.

A charitable interpretation of this fiasco is that the Administration slipped up in letting Kofi Annan visit Baghdad, just as President Clinton's national-security team set themselves up at that Ohio State town meeting, walking blindfolded into a minefield of campus leftism and public doubts. But what did they expect of Kofi Annan's mission? This was what a "diplomatic solution" was bound to look like. A more cynical interpretation is that a fudge was what they wanted—because they feared taking military action without any clear purpose.

If that is so, something may be retrieved from the wreckage of the Administration's policy. Given time, Saddam will certainly violate even the loose accords he has now accepted. President Clinton must use that time—and the international odium which Saddam's violations will arouse (if intelligently exploited by U.S. public diploma-

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Governor Tucker Turns

Whitewater, once believed to be
Quiescent as a painted sea,
Begins to slosh as Jim Guy spills
The awful truth about Bill's bills.
The subject's so antique, his flip
Affects one like awaking Rip;
But Mr. Clinton's wide awake,
So watch him rattle, roll, and shake.

—W. H. VON DREELE

cy)—to adopt a stronger policy over the long term, as *NR* and some of Clinton's congressional critics have been urging. Such a strategy would aim to bring down Saddam rather than merely to irritate him. And not just Saddam himself, but the entire Baathist regime. It would include assembling a united Iraqi opposition, building up its military forces, assisting guerrilla activity in Iraq, rebuilding bridges to the members of the Gulf coalition, and above all making clear to all concerned that this time the U.S. is seriously engaged for the long haul.

On the other hand, maybe someone other than President Clinton should explain this new policy.

Congress, Go Home

LITTLE or no good will come out of Capitol Hill for the remainder of the year. No tax cuts of any significance. No tax reform. No eliminations of Cabinet-level departments. Probably not even the termination of a single government program out of the thousands that crowd the $1.75-trillion federal budget. The National Endowment for the Arts will live on. The Legal Services Corporation will get full funding for its squads of left-wing lawyers. Hundreds of millions of federal bilingual-education dollars will continue to impede the teaching of English in schools across America. No paycheck-protection act. No civil-rights act outlawing preferences.

And this is the best-case scenario. Politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum, so expect the idea void to be filled with bad legislation. Rep. Bud Shuster's highway bill—filled with pork projects, from roads, to bridges, to museums, to bike paths—busts an already spendthrift budget deal by some $30 billion. Republicans may well give Bill Clinton $18 billion in foreign-aid money for the International Monetary Fund. They will create a new entitlement: a federal baby-sitting subsidy, made available only for parents who use institutionalized "child care," not for stay-at-home moms or those who use informal, nonregulated babysitters. Republicans are likely to cave in to demands for a rise in the minimum wage—but only after suffering the maximum pain for opposing it. The fall will bring elections and thus a flurry of last-minute spending as the ransom President Clinton will exact before allowing our legislators to go home and campaign.

Republicans defend their white-flagged retreat from the conservative agenda by noting that in this let-the-good-times-roll environment, voters are perfectly content with the status quo. In that case, give the people what they want: adjourn for the year.

Let It Grow

WHEN it still seemed likely that the United States would use force against Iraq, Madeleine Albright discussed the expansion of NATO with the foreign ministers of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic during a Washington meeting of the New Atlantic Initiative. On this occasion American diplomacy had a small but undoubted success. In an anteroom, the Secretary of State made last-minute changes to her speech reflecting the strong support for U.S. policy on Iraq that she had received from the three NATO applicants around the coffee table.

The incident underscored a point made both by Radek Sikorski, *NR*'s longtime roving correspondent who is now Poland's deputy foreign minister, and by his boss, Bronislaw Geremek (also an *NR* contributor). NATO's potential new members, as former satellites of the Soviet Union, have a greater natural sympathy with the U.S. than do some Western European members of the alliance. Far from weakening NATO, their entry would bolster American leadership and strengthen the Atlantic ties that have preserved peace in Europe for fifty years.

Indeed, the case for expanding NATO is very like the case for establishing it in the first place. It will expand the zone of stability, and thus of prosperity, in Europe by bringing more European countries into an alliance led by the one power that no European really fears—namely, the good old U. S. of A. This serves American interests in three ways: it prevents European wars; it creates markets for American exports and investments; and, as Mr. Sikorski argues, it creates allies who have a general incentive to support American interests elsewhere. Indeed, the mere prospect of NATO membership has persuaded Eastern European countries to make their economies freer, to introduce more democratic practices, and—most important of all—to settle their border and ethnic disputes. These are major gains which would be put at risk if NATO were now to reject enlargement.

Objections to NATO expansion cannot withstand serious scrutiny. The costs? The higher-end estimates, as Richard Perle has observed, are based on the extravagant assumption that the Hungarian air force must be brought up to the same level of military effectiveness as the USAF

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(though the Spanish air force never has been). Will Americans die for Danzig? We did last time. This century's European wars, in which Americans ultimately fought and died, began in part because the aggressors believed America would not intervene. NATO enlargement would deter that miscalculation. Driving Russia into hostility? But those in the Russian elite most opposed to NATO expansion are also the most chauvinist and anti-American. Appeasing them would encourage the hope that they could reverse the historical verdict of 1989.

A more sophisticated objection is lodged by Sam Nunn, Brent Scowcroft, and other certified moderates: NATO enlargement should be "linked" to the expansion of the European Union. That may sound reasonable, but it is a recipe for inaction: the EU has dragged its feet on expansion, preferring to concentrate on monetary experiments. Besides, as Secretary Albright pointed out in her NAI speech: ". . . it is not in America's interests to subordinate critical security interests of NATO to another institution. We are a leader in NATO; we're not even members of the EU." Underneath its veneer of moderation, the Nunn–Scowcroft objection amounts to a sophisticated isolationism—a "Europe for the Europeans," when modern history suggests that Europe without Americans generally comes to grief.

These fallacies have nonetheless attracted an odd coalition including the *New York Times*, Pat Buchanan, the Cato Institute, and some Republican senators. Fortunately, Jesse Helms has handled the issue with skill and leadership. It is now up to Trent Lott to make clear that the GOP as a whole welcomes some of America's strongest friends into the neighborhood.

Euromania

THE irresistible progress of the Euro—the European Union's single currency, due to be launched on January 1, 1999—is rather like the ectoplasm extruded by spiritualist mediums. It defies the laws of reality, arouses wonderment in believers, and cannot bear close examination. Thus it seems awe-inspiring, at first glance, that 11 European countries have reduced their budget deficits to below the 3 per cent of gross domestic product required for Euro membership. Was this miracle achieved by long-term reforms to their vast pension and welfare systems which burden the productive sector and depress employment? No—it was worked in the dark by a combination of false accounting (e.g., bringing next year's revenue into this year's budget) and genuine tax hikes.

Now look behind the drapes. It is just plausible that Italians, leery of the Lira, might willingly pay a little more in taxes in order to get a more stable currency. But why would Germans do so in order to get a currency less stable than the fabulous Mark? Easy: they wouldn't. Two out of three Germans are opposed to such a risk, Helmut Kohl's party is losing local elections heavily, and even the experts are divided—155 economists have just called for the Euro to be "delayed."

But Chancellor Kohl, like most political leaders throughout the continent, is determined to impose the Euro as a device to prevent a future European war. Single currencies, however, do not prevent wars: Yugoslavia had one in 1991, Spain in 1936, and the U.S. in 1861. Might the Euro even cause wars—or at any rate greater social conflict? Merely qualifying for it has produced very high rates of unemployment: 11.6 per cent in Germany, 12.1 in Italy, 12.2 in France, and 20.3 in Spain. This fiscal austerity will not end on January 1; it will extend well into the Euro's final stage in 2002.

Above all, a single currency means that economic adjustments must take place in the real economy, either by vast Euro-wide transfer payments (alienating taxpayers), or by reductions in wages (provoking unions), or by movements of workers across frontiers (annoying everyone). Moral: stay out of the currency markets and invest in tear gas, water cannons, and rubber truncheons.

Mr. Manners

NEW York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has been telling his fellow Gothamites they ought to be more polite, and they have responded with a great, *Huh? Wha?*

Giuliani has made several interconnected proposals: a crackdown on jaywalkers and bad drivers; civility classes in the public schools; zoning laws that would drive strip clubs and porn shops into remote industrial wastelands. Giuliani has defended these goals skillfully. "Some people . . . have nostalgia for the old Times Square" when there were "graffiti on every wall and sex shops on every block. But remember what it was really like. Remember the fear." If people "have to put up with incivility and disrespect for their rights every day, they will remain basically pessimistic about the future." But if city government conveys a sense that it cares, "then more and more people begin to feel . . . optimis[tic]."

Critics refused the mayor's invitation to civility for reasons good and bad. It was pointed out that he is a notably abrasive personality. The New York Civil Liberties Union attacked sex-industry regulations as an assault on the First Amendment, and a court has put the proposed laws on hold until it can decide what the Founders thought about HOT XXX GIRLS.

But Giuliani is onto something. "Civility," "civic," and "city" all have a common linguistic root. "Bourgeois," a word used as an insult by free spirits and low-lifes, literally means "town dweller." City life aspires to order, not squalor. The great success of Giuliani's first term—the historic drop in crime rates—began with attending to "minor" crimes, like panhandling and farebeating.

The real danger in Giuliani's campaign is that he will

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lose sight of the other great millstones around the necks of many American cities, including New York: a welfare class and a social-service class that keep taxes and deficits high. New York, increasingly a one-industry town, harvests money when Wall Street does. But if the city's economy is not reformed, the next slump will hobble whatever optimism Giuliani has managed to create.

Harry Caray, R I P

YEAR in and year out, Harry Caray, America's best known and most beloved baseball broadcaster, held forth from the announcer's booth at Wrigley Field, entertaining Cubs fans from coast to coast via superstation WGN. Caray's distinctive style—formed in the days before free agency and multi-million-dollar Nike contracts—and his love of the game were fixed in the national consciousness. There was his trademark exclamation, "Holy Cow!"; his joyful "It might be; it could be; it is—a home run!" The shout, "Cubs win! Cubs win!" at the end of the occasional games they actually did win. The incessant chatter between pitches ("Visiting today are Don and Lois Lewanski of Racine, Wisconsin, here to root for the Cubs") that made thousands of people celebrities for a day in their hometowns. And his standard sign-off, "So long, everybody."

Then there was the mangled pronunciation of players' names (especially Hispanic ones). In the course of the game, Villaneuva might be pronounced "Villanova," "Vayanova," and "Villanuevo." Michael Jordan—an enthusiastic Cubs fan—reportedly declined a Caray interview because he feared being introduced to the world as "Michael Jackson." Finally, of course, there was Caray's ritual of leading the fans in a heartfelt, if less than tuneful, rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" during the seventh-inning stretch.

On Valentine's Day, in Palm Springs, Caray died of a heart attack. He had been honored by the Smithsonian Institution and feted at the White House, but until the end he was still just good old Harry.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

The *Boston Globe* published your column on creationism this week and I was shocked—shocked!—that you had Juliet say, according to the typing monkey, ". . . wherefore art thou, Romeo?"

Did you mean that the monkey still wouldn't get it right? For what Juliet says is: ". . . wherefore art thou Romeo?" She isn't asking why he exists (nor, as some seem to think, is "wherefore" a fancy Elizabethan word for "where") but, in modern parlance, "What did you have to go and be Romeo for?" It's names—especially Montague and Capulet, of course—that are the issue.

To adapt another line from the play: What's in a comma? Sometimes quite a lot.

Yours severely,
Eva Moseley
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mrs. Moseley: Quite right, and nicely corrected. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

It is always exciting to discover a great writer in our midst. There is particular pleasure in discovering that some of those we thought were gone are still among us.

You will therefore doubtless understand the special *frisson* I experienced upon opening the latest catalogue of the Audio Book Club and discovering that their offerings include *author-approved abridgements* of *Don Quixote*, *The Iliad*, and *Beowulf*.

May I suggest that, as soon as possible, you devote a *Firing Line* to a literary discussion with Mr. Cervantes, Mr. Homer, and the ever-prolific Mr. Anonymous?

Cordially,
Rosanne Klass
New York, N.Y.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Pray tell, exactly what cheese do you prefer on your "bacon and cheese" sandwiches? I cannot remember the source of the item, but I believe you mentioned it in either *Airborne* or *Racing through Paradise*, both of which I am revisiting after far too long . . .

Thanks for entertaining the rather peculiar query.

Sincerely,
Lee Vardell
Jefferson City, Mo.

Dear Mr. Vardell: Any cheese except cream cheese. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Ever since I gave up male chauvinism for the social awareness of my softer feminine side, one particular concern has weighed heavily on my mind. Is it really true that Betsy Ross was sexually harassed and abused by Benjamin Franklin? If so, then why is nothing being done about it? At very least, it seems to me, apologies should be made. I think everyone named Franklin should beg the forgiveness of everyone named Ross.

If you agree, please write your congressman.

Sincerely,
Robert A. Mercer
Jaffrey, N.H.

Dear Mr. Mercer: A fine idea. And the Franklin Mint should give free coins to all Rosses. Cordially, **—WFB**

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THE POPE
(As Seen by Progressive Catholics)

The word "Pope" is related to the Latin *papa* (father). The Pope is the Holy *Father*, not Mother, not unisex Parent. He's the Vicar of Christ, and Christ revealed the *Father* in Heaven. Like Abraham, the Pope is — yes — a *Patriarch*.

Fatherhood matters, both in society and the Church, where we've been losing touch with something essential about reality, namely, the authority imaged in the male (Eph. 5:23). That authority is an icon of the Father in Heaven. The family has been falling apart, largely because husbands have become weak and irresponsible. The result of feminized or missing fathers is often kids who are confused, degenerate, or delinquent.

And the Church has been disintegrating because many bishops and priests have shrunk from being real fathers to their people, preferring instead to be indulgent mothers. As a result of this abdication of leadership, large sectors of the laity have become disoriented and, like lost sheep, have fallen for the shallow enticements of our decadent culture.

In our age of gender confusion, when authentic fatherhood is reviled, it's no wonder that progressive Catholics — those who yearn to be in step with the times — are embarrassed to have a Pope, a *Papa*. And when the Pope, like any good father, says *no* and stands by his word, they throw tantrums. But for the good of his beloved children's souls, the Pope, like his predecessors, says *no* to priestesses, goddesses, androgynous deities, suicide, hedonism, abortion, homosexuality, etc. The Church dealt those pagan forces a huge defeat long ago, but paganism is back with a vengeance. And the neopagan forces in the Church, especially the man-hating feminists and active homosexuals, are seeking to emasculate the Holy Father. To achieve that, they and their allies would "democratize" the Church. The Pope would become a figurehead, like the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Church would resemble the Episcopal Church, where just about anything goes morally and theologically but there's enough ritual to make it all seem right.

To the progressive Catholics who persist in caricaturing the Pope as a medieval Darth Vader ("Dark Father"), we say: Cease and desist, and get with the program!

To the namby-pamby "moderate" Catholics who say, "Let's have a dialogue about the divisive issues," we say: Appeasement doesn't work! It only encourages and legitimizes the saboteurs in the Church — as when Chamberlain had a friendly dialogue with the neopagan Hitler in Munich in 1938.

And to orthodox Catholics, we say: Hang in there! We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a monthly magazine in the service of the Catholic tradition, refuse to surrender the Faith or compromise it away. We're unafraid to be unfashionable, and we call a spade a spade. If you stand with us, or if you'd like to lean on us for encouragement or strength, subscribe today!

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SCANDAL FILE

Monicagate will be with us a long time, and so will its consequences—for Clinton's governing philosophy, for his Vice President, for the Presidency, and for our mores.

Clinton Forever

RAMESH PONNURU

NO MATTER how hard James Carville and Co. spin, Bill Clinton's Presidency is likely to go down in history as the punchline to a dirty joke. If he's lucky. This is, all in all, a salutary development. When Clinton was first inaugurated, visions of Camelot II danced in the heads of his more youthful and impressionable supporters. Now future generations of liberals will not be able to batten on bogus memories of idealism inspired by his Administration.

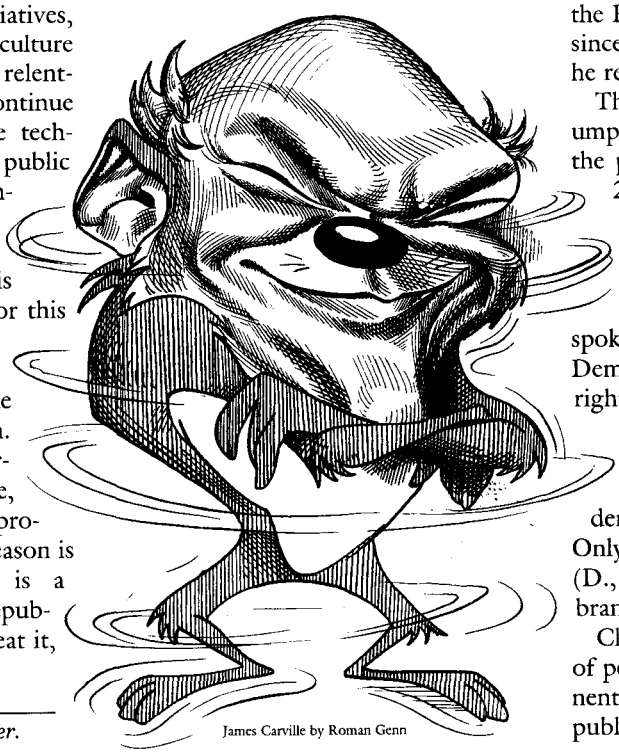
Plenty of people in Washington think the scandal is bringing the Clinton Presidency to an end, either literally or practically. If they are right, the scandal will probably also wash away the distinctive style Clinton has brought to the office: the promises that contain their own retraction, the make-believe initiatives, the legalistic excuses. A political culture that finally recoils from Clinton's relentless shabbiness is not likely to continue marveling at his mastery of the techniques of deception. Perhaps a public newly appreciative of plainspokenness will tear away the gauzy sentimentality in which so much of the rest of our politics is wrapped, although the chances for this are admittedly slimmer.

Conservatives should cheer these possibilities, but not take too much comfort from them. Clintonism as a style may not survive Bill Clinton's political life, but Clintonism as a domestic program almost certainly will. The reason is simple: it works. Clintonism is a powerful political formula. Republicans have not found a way to beat it, and a lot of them are joining it.

Mr. Ponnuru is NR*'s national reporter.*

One reason they haven't beaten it is their tendency to underestimate it or even to deny that it exists. Clinton has bested his opponents because of a strong economy, they say, or because of the powers of a demagogic Presidency, or because of public ignorance of his closet liberalism. He casts a spell on the public, and Congress is full of cowards —the same explanation liberals had for Ronald Reagan's success in the Eighties. Or: Clinton hasn't bested his opponents at all; it only looks that way. In any case, he certainly doesn't have a consistent program.

In fact Clinton has always maintained an ideological commitment to expanding the scope of (and dependency on) government, and a sociological commitment to the New Class that operates



James Carville by Roman Genn

it. That's why conservatives call him a liberal. But the conservative bark has no bite because Clinton isn't a liberal in the sense that voters have come to reject. He jettisoned the excesses of liberalism on race, sex, crime, and welfare by slighting Sister Souljah, opposing same-sex marriage, supporting the death penalty, and promising to "end welfare as we know it." Thus he detached himself from the negative associations voters had with liberalism: weakness, lack of realism, elitism, arrogance. Unlike most liberals, Clinton also understands how balanced budgets can serve liberalism—a discovery on a par with Ronald Reagan's discovery of the political virtues of deficits.

But Clinton hasn't succeeded simply by being a New Democrat. New Democrats want serious entitlement reform; he defends entitlements like a paleoliberal. They would have made a budget deal with Republicans in 1995; he did not. They genuinely want to mend racial preferences; he does not. They want to target programs better; he knows that better targeting means smaller constituencies.

Only when he has departed from this formula of culturally moderate, activist government for the middle class has he stumbled. From late 1992 through 1994, Clinton seemed to threaten both the middle class's cultural sensibilities (Joycelyn Elders and gays-in-the-military) and its economic interests (ClintonCare, which ironically began as an attempt to seduce the middle class). The result was the Republican Congress, which has ever since been the perfect foil to Clinton as he returned to his winning formula.

This is why Clintonism has largely triumphed among Democrats, except on the politically unique issue of trade. In 2000 Al Gore, Bob Kerrey, and Bill Bradley will all run for President as modified versions of Clinton with zipper control. Dick Gephardt is generally regarded as the leading spokesman for the left wing of the Democratic Party, but he is to Clinton's right on some cultural issues, like abortion, and has made his peace with Clintonism on others, like welfare—he voted against reform but denies any interest in revisiting it. Only no-hopers like Sen. Paul Wellstone (D., Minn.) reject Clintonism root and branch.

Clinton has also passed another test of political success by moving his opponents toward his positions. True, Republicans have been proposing new

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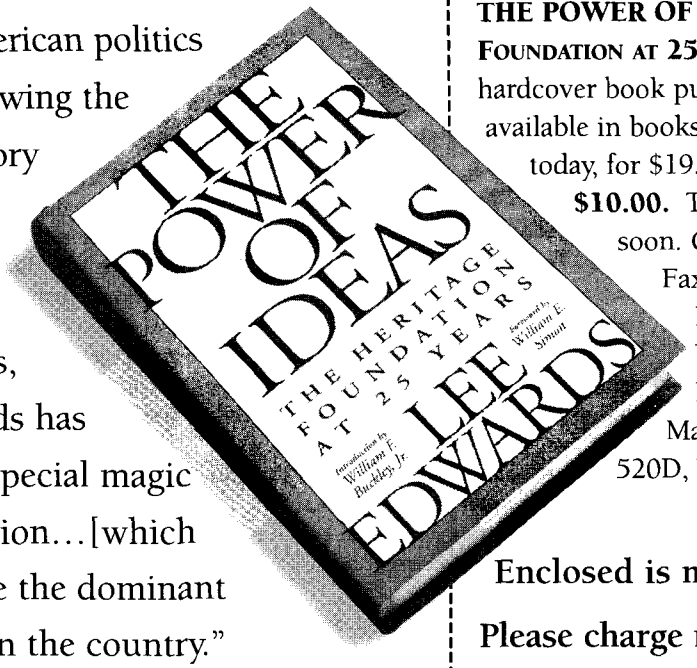

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Introduction by William F. Buckley Jr. & Foreword by William E. Simon

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government programs and signing on to others forever. But it's not just moderates any more. Conservatives are getting in on the act. The sponsors of a bill to regulate HMOs—a Clintonesque pitch to the suburbs—include some of the most conservative members of Congress. Most Republican governors have not been shy about spending new-found money, and they want more. Those governors, and Congress as a whole, are breaking records for popularity. So the GOP may prosper in the present environment even as limited-government conservatism declines.

Clintonism is a powerful political formula. Republicans have not found a way to beat it.

The Clinton scandals probably increase the likelihood of that scenario. Republicans could make undeserved gains in 1998 and 2000 without increasing the size or power of conservative constituencies. Only if they then use those gains to lock in political reforms that do have that effect—e.g., defunding the Left—would conservatism advance. That's what liberal Democrats did after 1974, gaining a twenty-year lock on Congress.

But Watergate also lulled Democrats into a complacency about the McGovernization of their party that cost them throughout that period. The comparison between Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon is once again instructive. Nixon, too, scrambled existing political coalitions and was hated by his opponents for essentially personal and cultural reasons. Liberals let their fixation with one man's weaknesses and scandals, and their glee at the fallout, blind them to real political developments. It would be a shame if conservatives made the same mistake. □

Gore More Years

ROBERT ZELNICK

VICE President Al Gore seemed positively manic in imploring a University of Illinois crowd "to join me in supporting him and standing by his side" during a strange joint appearance with President Clinton on January 25, just after the Monica Lewinsky scandal broke. But don't be fooled. In battling Kenneth Starr and his G-men, Gore's instinct is to stand behind Clinton—way behind.

In the days following that appearance, the Vice President's aides let it be known that he was sticking closely to previously arranged schedules, concentrating on the legislative agenda of expanded Medicare and new child-care tax credits, and treating the Lewinsky matter as settled, at least for the time being, by the President's assertion that he had never had a sexual relationship with "that woman."

Indeed, in a wet kiss that passed for a *Today* show profile by NBC's Claire Shipman, Gore passed up three tantalizing invitations: 1) to reject the idea of judging a President by his personal conduct ("Well, that's for the American people to decide"); 2) to endorse Hillary Clinton's charge of a right-wing conspiracy ("Well, I respect her opinions and analysis"); and 3) to bludgeon Mr. Starr ("I'm not going to comment on Judge Starr").

For Gore—whose sense of duty is genuine and whose role as (to alter a phrase of Miss Lewinsky's) the "Little He" long ago passed the point of method acting—keeping his distance from Clinton's personal ordeal is undoubtedly difficult. But Gore aides who think beyond the vagaries of the polls must realize it is the only way for him to survive the President's impending train wreck, and to seize the mantle of the Administration's moderate New Democrat program as his own.

One way or the other, Clinton's Presidency is in its Indian summer. Starr is likely to develop overwhelming evidence that Mr. Clinton lied about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, and then dump it on the House Judiciary Committee. Not a scintilla of evidence of presidential wrongdoing will be left to the public imagination. Toss in the specter of a public trial in the Paula Jones civil suit, and there are all the ingredients for a debased and debilitated Presidency that will make the term "lame duck" seem a symbol of past glory.

Can Gore possibly prosper in such a scenario? The answer may well be, Yes. Consider:

—Gore has lived a life of personal probity and familial devotion that contrasts starkly with the President's. In 1996, Gore may have out-Clintoned Clinton in raising campaign funds from questionable sources, but he will still be seen as Clinton's polar opposite on matters of personal comportment.

—There is at least a remote chance that Gore will become President before Clinton's term expires, and his history suggests he makes a better incumbent than competitor from the field.

—The electorate is feeling a prosperity-induced resistance to significant change. In this environment, GOP efforts to revamp the tax code, allow individuals to opt out of the Social Security system, and subsidize private elementary schooling may appear more "radical" than anything Gore will offer.

—With the hard work on welfare reform, a balanced budget, and crime finished for now, Gore can nod in the direction of his liberal constituencies without abandoning his centrist strategic perch. He has already spent the better part of two years biting into Richard Gephardt's base of labor and government-worker support.

—And there are all the advantages a Vice President has in seeking his party's nomination. These include high visibility, a good fundraising base, the opportunity to build effective state-by-state organizations, and the sort of experience in dealing with foreign affairs that inspires confidence in the electorate.

Gore has lived a life of personal probity that contrasts starkly with the President's.

Gore's career, particularly his 1988 quest for the Presidency, does suggest some weaknesses. He can think through a campaign, but political intuition is not his long suit. He can be dreary and repetitive. Former aides complain that

Mr. Zelnick is working on a book on Vice President Gore.

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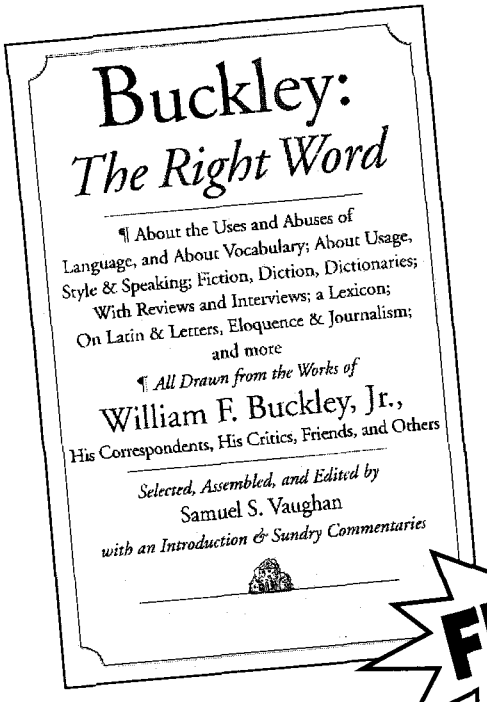
The Write Stuff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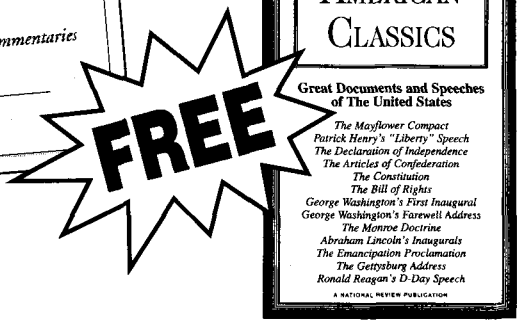

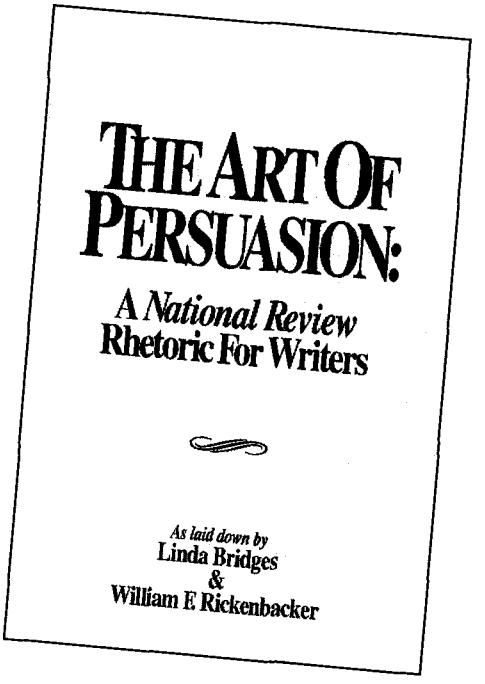

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his motto seems to be, Never delegate what can be done by the candidate himself during an 18-hour day. He sometimes makes unwise alliances, and doesn't connect well on the stump.

But the larger danger to Gore remains that his fundraising excesses will come back to haunt him. Some weeks ago a close friend of both Gore and Clinton mused that one of the unreported dangers of the Lewinsky affair was that intimates of the President could feel betrayed by his personal recklessness and decide to come clean on the fundraising story. A day or two later, the President's old Little Rock chum Charlie Trie returned from self-exile to face indictment, and a short time after that Maria Hsia, a key player in Gore's "donor maintenance" activities among Buddhist monks was also indicted.

Neither may blow the whistle on their principals. But then again, years ago a buttoned-down little White House counsel named John Dean seemed a poor bet to turn on his boss. □

Unmaking of the Presidency

FORREST McDONALD

CLINTON apologists complain that Kenneth Starr should get off the President's back so that he can devote his attention to "doing his job." But nobody defines his "job" in such a way as to include the most important part: the ritualistic, ceremonial, and symbolic. It is not enough for a President to govern well; he must also seem presidential. He must inspire confidence in his integrity, ability, intelligence, and capacity to take charge, no matter what the course of events.

Depending on what the times demand, the President can perform his role in a variety of ways. Eisenhower could be a benignly competent father figure, and Jack Kennedy could project youthful vigor and new ideas, and each could be eminently successful in fulfilling the symbolic and ceremonial functions.

But when a President disregards these functions—or openly flouts them—the Presidency suffers. Indeed, as the Clinton–Lewinsky imbroglio unravels, it's not just the credibility of the incumbent, but the credibility of the Presidency as an institution that is imperiled.

This may seem an unlikely prospect for a scandal involving a 21-year-old intern considering that the Presidency survived the excesses of recent Presidents such as Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. But a look at history shows that the office has in fact been thoroughly discredited twice before—and has come close a third time.

Mr. McDonald is a professor of history at the University of Alabama and the author of The American Presidency: An Intellectual History *(Kansas).*

The first occasion was the Presidency of Andrew Jackson. Jackson's gauche personal behavior (e.g., the Peggy Eaton affair [see Florence King's review, *NR*, Feb. 23]), his demagoguery ("the reign of King Mob" was ushered in by America's first frontiersman President), and his destructive policies (killing the Bank of the United States, crippling the Supreme Court, first by defying it and then by appointing Roger Brooke Taney—who later wrote the *Dred Scott* decision—to succeed John Marshall) outraged the congressional establishment. Constitutionally, Congress has the power to dominate the other branches of government, if it has the will to do so, and after Jackson it had the will. With one exception, no President during the remainder of the century dared exert the full constitutional powers of his office. The exception was Lincoln, and it is conceivable that if Lincoln had lived, he would have suffered at the hands of Radical Reconstructionists the same fate as Andrew Johnson.

The second occasion was the Administration of U. S. Grant. The scandals of the early 1870s not only further discredited the Presidency but also tainted the Congress, many of whose members were involved in the infamous Crédit Mobilier affair (in which insiders profited illegally from railroad subsidies) and other corrupt dealings. The consequence was that for a generation nobody trusted either the Presidency or the Congress. Into the vacuum rushed the Supreme Court, with a cycle of judicial activism that lasted until the 1930s.

The near miss was during the Harding era. Large-scale embezzlements, thefts, and briberies came to light, but the effects were minimized by flukish circumstances. Harding was much beloved; the revelations broke only after he died in 1923; and his successor, Calvin Coolidge, was as upright a symbol of rectitude as could be imagined.

The lesson that these bits of history teach is plain: The Presidency can be gravely harmed even if the President himself emerges unscathed. Jackson and Grant were both elected to second terms, and doubtless Harding would have been, too. Moreover, had there been approval-rating polls then, all three would have received high marks.

IN current circumstances, it can be argued that a general skepticism about the Presidency is not a bad thing. Since the end of the Cold War, we no longer need the kind of leadership in foreign affairs that was necessary during the previous five decades. Also, weakened public trust may serve as a restraint on the inherent tendency of second-term Presidents to indulge in overseas adventuring. Too, now that the age of big government is over, we certainly do not need a President who formulates and pushes through Congress broad legislative programs.

Nevertheless, Clinton's Administration is more corrupt than Grant's and Harding's combined, and he is more deceitful than any of his predecessors. He may not fall, partly because of his very deviousness and partly because of the cumbersomeness of the impeachment process. In the short term, that is not especially significant; we can live through his lame-duckship.

What is significant is that, when Clinton's chronic mendacity finally penetrates the popular consciousness, it will be difficult for Americans to trust their Presidents for a long time to come. And that is likely to have profound—and unpredictable—consequences for the constitutional order. If there is another presidential power vacuum, what rough beast will slouch onto center stage? □

Clinton's Administration is more corrupt than Grant's and Harding's combined.

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Don't Ask, Don't Tell

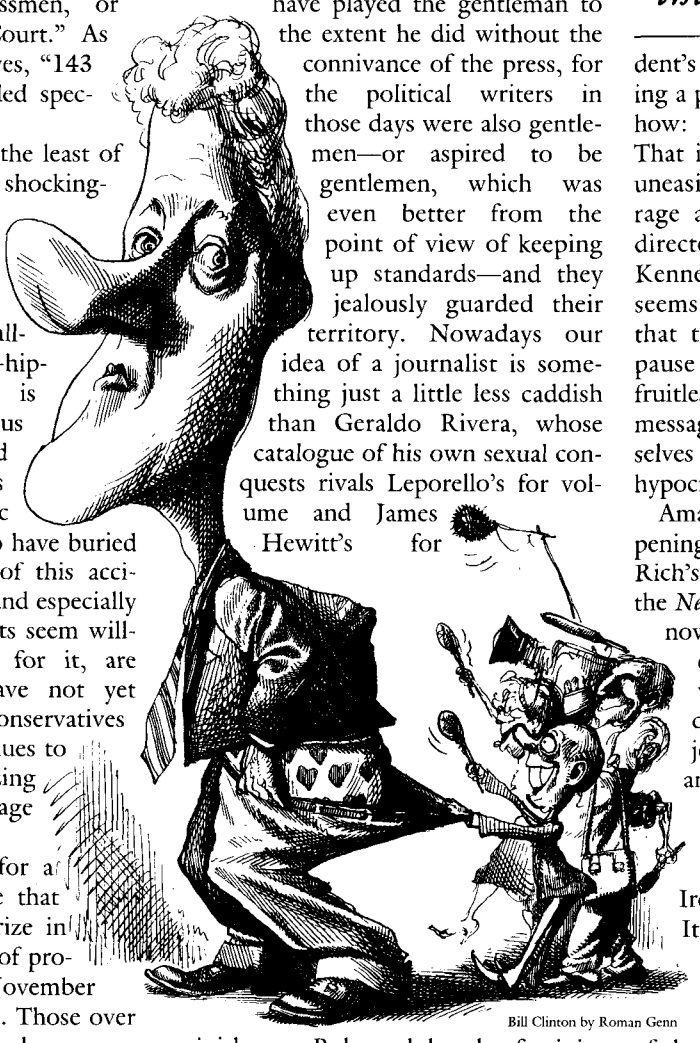
JAMES BOWMAN

ALAIN de Botton, the brilliant "Literary Life" columnist of the London *Sunday Telegraph* and author of *How Proust Can Change Your Life*, reminds us that Walt Whitman's introduction to *Leaves of Grass* celebrates the poet's free-ranging sexual appetite and his "intention of becoming the national prophet of unashamed sex." In this volume—which was one day and in a very different world to be given as a love-offering by Bill Clinton to Monica Lewinsky—Whitman even ventured to hope that his public shedding of inhibition should influence his fellow countrymen, up to the highest in the land—"perhaps launching at the President, leading persons, Congressmen, or judges of the Supreme Court." As Mr. de Botton drily observes, "143 years later, he has succeeded spectacularly."

Or has he? For it is not the least of the ironies surrounding the shockingly public sex life of our first rock 'n' roll President that, so far from justifying himself by appealing to a Whitmanesque, let-it-all-hang-out ethos, the crypto-hippie in the White House is lying his head off, and thus implicitly invoking the aid of all the old hypocrisies about sex that his idealistic generation was supposed to have buried forever. The implications of this accidental counter-revolution, and especially of the fact that the feminists seem willingly to have signed up for it, are tremendous. But they have not yet begun to dawn on those conservatives whom force of habit continues to keep focused on maximizing the potential political damage to Mr. Clinton.

They should step back for a moment, look up, and see that there is a much greater prize in their grasp than the honor of providing a smooth path to November 2000 for President Al Gore. Those over forty can remember a time when a gentleman (quaint concept!) had not only a right but a duty to lie in such circumstances. It was the behavior of a cad to bandy a woman's name in public and unpardonably inconsiderate both to his wife and to his mistress. Say what you will about Jack Kennedy, his affairs were not also indiscretions, and scandal was never allowed to bring a blush to Jackie's cheek. The fact that Hillary, like her husband, appears to be altogether incapable of blushing should not be allowed to dim the luster of that shining ideal of old-fashioned chivalry, or the hope that it might be possible to resurrect it for a post-feminist age.

Of course, Kennedy could not have played the gentleman to the extent he did without the connivance of the press, for the political writers in those days were also gentlemen—or aspired to be gentlemen, which was even better from the point of view of keeping up standards—and they jealously guarded their territory. Nowadays our idea of a journalist is something just a little less caddish than Geraldo Rivera, whose catalogue of his own sexual conquests rivals Leporello's for volume and James Hewitt's for swinishness. Bolstered by the feminist principle that "the personal is political," the people's presumed "right to know"—a legacy of Vietnam and Watergate—would seem to have afforded such characters unchecked license to make even the most discreet and considerate of public officials into blackguards as great as themselves.



Bill Clinton by Roman Genn

Yet we ought to consider that the lesson of the polls and of Clinton's seemingly unsinkable approval ratings may not be, after all, that the people are either blasé about sex or partisan about the President's supposed accomplishments. It may be that they are simply sick of their own right to know—at least, to know details about the President's sexual practices—and are registering a protest in the only way they know how: by pretending not to know it. That is why people in the media seem uneasily aware that such public outrage as there is about the scandal is directed neither at Clinton nor at Kenneth Starr but at themselves. It seems to me not too much to hope that the journalistic profession might pause for a moment in its endless and fruitless self-examinations and get the message that other people besides themselves must once again be allowed to be hypocrites.

Nowadays our idea of a journalist is something just a little less caddish than Geraldo Rivera.

Amazingly, that may already be happening. One straw in the wind is Frank Rich's quoting of Robert Redford in the *New York Times* to the effect that he now has doubts that he and the producers of *All the President's Men* were right to glamorize as they did the kind of swashbuckling journalists prepared to publish anything to bring down a President. That's one shoe. We'll know that the other shoe has dropped when Gloria Steinem or Patricia Ireland calls Anita Hill a lying slut. It seems pretty unlikely that feminist hypocrisy will ever be so frankly acknowledged, but it is still possible that the cultural tide of the 1960s has finally turned—if only we conservatives have the magnanimity, the resolve, and the foresight to support our President. □

Mr. Bowman is American Editor of the Times Literary Supplement.

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Comic Oprah

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MARK STEYN

IN THE careless shorthand of Washington correspondents, the Administration's Ohio fiasco was supposed to be an "Oprah-style" town meeting. If only. Had Oprah, rather than Madeleine Albright, gone out to endorse bombing Iraq, Saddam would now be in the same enfeebled state as those Texas cattle barons: within days, polls would have shown 98 per cent support for saturation bombing; the self-help guide *How to Make Your Own Smart Bomb* would have reached the top of the best-seller lists; the new CD by Oprah's musical guest, *Kenny G. Plays His Weapon of Mass Destruction*, would have gone platinum; luxuriantly mustachioed men would be lining up to have their Saddamite growths pruned back to something closer to the trim upper lip of Oprah's beau, Stedman Graham. Conversely, if Madeleine, rather than Oprah, had gone on TV and announced that, because of mad-cow disease, she would never eat another burger, the world would have shrugged and gone back to its Double Whopper with Cheese, and there would have been no trial in Amarillo.

It's important to cling to that distinction when commentators start bandying about the word Oprahfication. In this fragmented media age, not many TV performers are privileged to become nouns and adjectives, admitted to the same select group as Thatcherism and Dickensian. If anything, Oprah Winfrey's achievement is more impressive than Margaret Thatcher's or Charles Dickens's. Oprahfication doesn't refer to anything as piffling as a partisan creed or a stylistic voice; as denounced by the *Wall Street Journal*, it means "public confession as a form of therapy," but even that doesn't quite cover it: rather, Oprahfication has become the routine designation for nothing less than the wholesale make-over of the nation, and then the world. Recently, it has been casually deployed to disparage not only President Clinton's "national conversation on race" but also the new, breast-beating post–Di, post–Killer Nanny, flaccid-upper-lipped British public. Oprahfication, in that sense, is a term that has slipped its original moorings: Oprah herself had nothing very illuminating to say about the Princess of Wales, and her own conversations on race tend to be more robust, bringing together the author of the insightful tome *Why Black People Tend to Shout* (I forget the reason) with a studioful of prime exhibits.

Oprah Winfrey by Roman Genn

But, as Ohio reminded us, there's a world of difference between the Winfrey wannabes and the genuine article. When Oprah decides personally to Oprahfy something or another, the results are spectacular: that show on mad-cow disease sent the price of beef into freefall and cost America's cattlemen millions. In January, when the good burghers of Amarillo decided to defend the good name of their good burgers in court, Oprah took her show, her producers, and her celebrity guests to the hitherto Lone Star State to defend the show's "quality, integrity, and fairness." This was the edition in which she said mad-cow disease "could make AIDS look like the common cold."

Actually, it's Oprah who makes AIDS look like the common cold. Within a couple of days of her showing up in Amarillo, the crowds were lining up for tickets, fans were waving pro-Oprah placards outside the courthouse, grateful citizens were telling reporters from *Entertainment Tonight* that they had lived in Texas all their lives and never thought they'd see the day when a bunch of megastars would honor their li'l ol' town with a visit, and suddenly those litigious cattlemen were looking like a beleaguered minority in their own backyard. Most of us non-daytime-TV-viewing types assumed that traditional rules would apply: that the locals would turn on the media big-shot who had so off-handedly slighted them from afar and stick by an important industry that not only provided direct employment but also sustained many other businesses in town.

But what do we know? In an Oprahfied America, no politics is local and most of life is televisual. For the citizens of Amarillo, their best pal from TV is more real than their real friends and

Mr. Steyn is film critic for The Spectator *and theater critic for* The New Criterion.

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neighbors on Main Street: it was no contest.

In little more than a decade, Oprah has spread AIDS-like into every nook and cranny of American life. Well, not exactly AIDS-like; she's more the opposite of HIV—whatever she infects grows as plump and bloated as she at her most corpulent. Even the sleepy backwater of American letters: people who hadn't bought a book in ten, twenty years started buying them simply on her say-so. We have Oprah to thank for *The Bridges of Madison County*, an indifferent seller until she picked it up—"Read *Bridges* in an afternoon," she said, "sitting in my living room crying." She failed to deliver her own autobiography, but sent Knopf instead a collection of low-fat recipes by her personal chef: it became the fastest-selling book in American history. Recently, the publishing industry discovered that, when Oprah recommends a book, not only does that title hit the best-seller charts but so do unrelated books with similar names: somewhere, no doubt, there's a retired Iowa dentist getting surprisingly large royalty checks for his memoirs (*The Bridgework of Madison County*). If Oprah were to endorse a self-help book called *How to Stop Buying Books Just because Your Favorite TV Host Recommends Them, You Pathetic, Craven Loser*, it would be an instant best-seller.

But the numbers alone fail to convey the sheer reach of Oprah. Today, no truly epochal moment in the history of the Republic occurs unless it is validated by her presence. When Ellen said, "Yep! I'm gay," Oprah was by her side, guesting on the sitcom as (what else?) the star's therapist. She is, of course, therapist to an entire nation. If only it weren't so hard for the rest of us to get an appointment. Asked to explain the causes of the 1992 riots, one angry black looter from South Central said: "We had to do something to get Oprah to Los Angeles." Well, it makes as much sense as any other reason.

IT HAS been a rapid rise. In 1985, she was hosting a local TV show in Chicago. But Quincy Jones happened to catch it and called her in to audition for *The Color Purple*, directed by Steven Spielberg. She had never acted before, but she wound up with an Oscar nomination and, more important, some lessons in moguldom from Jones and Spielberg. Like them, she formed her own company—Harpo Produc-

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tions—which took over her show, negotiated a canny syndication deal, and began pushing her nationwide. Harpo Productions has nothing to do with the silent Marx brother; it is "Oprah" spelled backward. Poor old Harpo—the original Harpo, that is. It's hard to believe now that anyone could make a career in America out of not talking: in that sense, Oprah *is* Harpo back to front. For there is no greater sin than silence in Oprah's brave, new cathartic world, where the road from Denial to

The Oprah form of discourse has been perpetuated throughout: O.J. uses it, and the Duchess of York, and President Clinton.

Rehab is spoken of as if they were stops on a vaudeville circuit ("I'm booked at the Pantheon in Denial, South Dakota, for two weeks"). And, in a way, it is the only vaudeville circuit left. Once upon a time, scholars confidently proclaimed that America's great contributions to twentieth-century culture were its vernacular art forms—jazz, the Western, musical comedy. But at century's end the only vernacular art form left is the vernacular itself—or, more accurately, the weird hybrid of slang and jargon that passes for talk on TV. Here's Oprah on Arnold Schwarzenegger: "Arnold is a mentor to a lot of men, but the thing that they're mentoring is the macho, the muscles. But what makes Arnold Arnold is the balance." Most of us guys would be perfectly content to have our macho mentored by other men, but not Arnie. "He knows and practices sensitivity."

Oprah is America's "wealthiest female entertainer," but she doesn't do anything that would have traditionally qualified as "entertaining"—sing or dance or tell jokes or juggle midgets while wearing a revolving bow tie. All she does is talk. She was not the first. But her predecessor, Phil Donahue, never achieved anything like her degree of market penetration. He did not become a noun: no one spoke of the Philification of America. Indeed, it is hard to recall now that this white-haired white male with no visible dysfunctionalisms was ever king of the airwaves. Phil did his best: when "Transvestites Who Date Their Wives' Fathers" (I quote from memory) was the topic of the day, he gamely dressed up in a frock and stiletto heels. But dressing up is all it was. By contrast, Oprah herself seems to be her own one-woman group booking, a vast conglomeration of all the nation's favorite victim groups: she's a woman, she's black, she's fat—or thin, or a dieting victim, ballooning up to 237 pounds in 1992, which is positively svelte by the standards of most of her viewers but makes her without doubt the largest female TV star of all time (traditionally, her ratings have been higher when she's heavier); she may or may not be lesbian, depending on whether you believe the supermarket tabloids or the terminally affianced Stedman Graham, Miss Adelaide to Oprah's Nathan Detroit; she was born out of wedlock in 1954, abandoned by her father, raped by a cousin when she was nine, sexually abused by an uncle and other miscellaneous blood relatives and several close family friends over the next five years, became a teenage mom and lost her baby . . . The standard rap against daytime talk shows—that they're voyeuristic—surely can't apply to her: a stifled yawn and a "been there, done that" seem more likely.

It's scarcely believable now, but there was a time, 15 years ago, when this sort of thing had to be pried out of celebrities; they didn't volunteer it. Possibly, if you searched hard enough, you could find one or two showbiz personalities who haven't claimed to have been abused as a child (Milton Berle hasn't, to the best of my knowledge), but otherwise, where Oprah led, lesser lights have been only too happy to follow.

What can we learn from this new confessional? Mostly that, unlike the old confessional, it uses the appearance of personal honesty as a form of evasion. By 1992, when Oprah went to Los Angeles for a post-riot update, her guests—the cream of the neighborhood's pillagers and looters—had mastered the buzzwords of the format. "I looted," said one, stabbing the air emphatically, "because I felt it was a cause that had to be met." Amid all the hapless Korean storekeepers there was a black businessman whose shop had also been razed. The chief looter had a ready answer: "All businesses were burnt, of course, in a situation that was perpetuated therein, you know, in a situation, we cannot, uh, say, okay, we are not going to have a black business burnt."

In olden days, your average looter preferred to give the media a wide berth and melt back into the anonymity of the crowd, but now the prospect of adding a second string to his brick as TV's Mister Riot more than outweighs any fear that appearing on a coast-to-coast talk show might prejudice any forthcoming trial. Producers are, after all, easily impressed: "Hey, get this guy! Not only can he pillage, he can also say 'perpetuated therein.'" But, in the years since, the Oprah form of public discourse has been perpetuated throughout: O.J. uses it, and the Duchess of York, and President Clinton. "Personal honesty" is the best way to dodge personal responsibility.

"Relax, Mrs. Hastings. It's just a phase of the moon he's going through."

PERHAPS no one sums up the deficiencies of the form better than the woman who started it. Oprah has been speaking for a living since she got her first gig in radio when she was still in high school; she has been speaking in public since the age of three, when she gave a talk at the Baptist church in Kosciusko, Mississippi, called "Jesus Rose on Easter Day." The other kids nicknamed her "Miss Jesus" and "The Preacher." But what exactly is she preaching? Like most showbiz personalities, she prefers the comforting vagaries of New Age spiritualism to the stricter confines of organized religion. "I went through a spiritual period in the early Eighties," she said, and, after *The Color Purple*, began buying up the film rights to various feel-good books. She was especially frustrated at being outbid on *The Education of Little Tree*, the reminiscences of a Cherokee boy. "It was a spiritual little

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book," she said. "I read it sitting on the porch of my farm in Indiana. Thought the trees were talking to me, too." Unfortunately, the author subsequently turned out to be not a Cherokee but a Klansman, Forrest Carter, the fellow who wrote George Wallace's "segregation forever" speech.

You'd have to have a heart of stone not to weep with laughter at that: the Oprahfier Oprahfied. Does it really matter whether the guy's a Cherokee or a Klansman as long as he can fake the generic maudlin mush beloved of Oprah's viewers? After all, Oprah herself maintains her own cunning divide between her public persona and her private self. We know lots of details of her life—like Melinda and Sandy, the names of her two beloved pet cockroaches from her dirt-poor childhood—but somehow the whole remains elusive. Whether she's gay or straight or just too busy, it's amazing that the person who introduced sexual confession to American television should have succeeded in keeping her own sexual identity under wraps. Is she or isn't she living with Stedman? Will she or won't she marry him? No one knows. But it's significant that both she and Rosie O'Donnell, her fellow daytime queen and rumored lesbian, have, in fact, no sexual image whatsoever. In what is supposed to be an age of titillation, American TV viewers are most comfortable with a vague, generalized cuddliness. But then, ever since her childhood, parceled out evenly among three regions of the country, everything about Oprah seems to be vague, generalized, emblematic.

So where next? The other week, a *Boston Globe* columnist mentioned her as a possible presidential candidate, though on what grounds she didn't say. What would President Winfrey's platform be? What does she believe in? Where does she stand on taxes or Social Security? Who knows? Who cares? Oprah's faux "book club" is more real to more Americans than the real book clubs their next-door neighbors belong to; her so-called "town meetings" more real than any real town's real town meeting. In the slide to a virtual culture of bland reflexive emotional impulses, Oprah is way ahead of the game. So why not a Winfrey Presidency? With Donahue lookalike Bill Clinton as her warm-up act, her political accession would have a certain symmetry. And at least that Ohio debacle would have been properly organized. □

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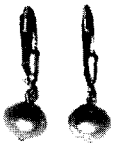

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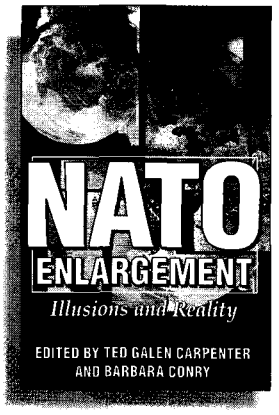

What is clear, however, is that NATO enlargement will create several problems. By including the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland while excluding other nations, NATO expansion threatens to create a new division of Europe and provoke Russia. Even worse, expansion would saddle the United States with unrealistic security obligations.

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Forced Isolation

When the Clinton Administration enters the foreign-policy arena, the name calling begins.

JOHN HILLEN

AT a recent meeting with a handful of foreign-policy experts, a senior State Department official lamented the lack of congressional enthusiasm for an indefinite American military commitment in Bosnia. "I've got to deal with such a large bloc of isolationists," he moaned. When several conservative attendees suggested that perhaps these congressmen were motivated not by "isolationism" but by a desire for some evidence that a resolution in Bosnia was at least as important to Europeans as to Americans, the man from the State Department was dismissive: Either you're with us or you're against us.

This is the attitude the Clinton Administration brings to almost every major foreign-policy issue. Whether the question before the house is Bosnia, NATO enlargement, an arms-control treaty, an environmental agreement, United Nations dues, Fast Track trade authority, or a bailout by the International Monetary Fund, the Administration boils it down to a simple choice: You can be an enlightened and sophisticated internationalist by supporting Administration policy, or you can take us back to a troglodytic isolationism. There can be no other legitimate opinions about what constitutes responsible internationalism.

This approach often works as a political tactic. By presenting complicated issues as a simple choice between wisdom and ignorance, the Administration often manages to divide the opposition. Instead of putting up for sophisticated discussion a range of possibilities for the method and scale of dealing with a particular problem, the Administration defines its opponents as followers of Pat Buchanan. Neoconservatives tend to take fright at the association and rush into the Administration camp (as they have done on Bosnia, the UN, and most arms-control treaties), leaving their conservative internationalist brethren alone and lonely.

Washington opinion-makers buy the false dichotomies. The *Washington Post* recently reported, for example, that "many IMF advocates feared that liberal House Democrats would join Republican anti-internationalists and libertarians to block financing for the IMF." In fact, Republican opposition to an open-ended IMF bailout has been led by the likes of George Shultz, William Simon, the Heritage Foundation, and the *Wall Street Journal*—none of them noted "anti-internationalists" or "libertarians" on foreign policy. As Shultz and Simon pointed out, one need not be a protectionist or libertarian to know that "the promise of an IMF bailout insulates financiers and politicians from the consequences of bad economic and financial practices . . . distorting the international investment market."

But Clinton's people were ready to go on the counterattack. They recruited hundreds of CEOs and former government trade officials to carry the Administration's water on the IMF issue in reiterating the false choices. Are you for a bailout that will save America's economic boom, or are you for an Asian-induced recession? Paul Volcker, former chairman of the Federal Reserve, summed up the choices thus: "The success of the American economy depends upon a harmonious world economy, and you can't get that by the main country in the world, the United States, retreating into isolationism." U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Thomas J. Donohue was even grimmer: "A U.S. leadership lapse in this critical economic realm may have dire political, and even national-security consequences." So fork over $18 billion or perish.

Similarly on the Chemical Weapons Treaty: Are you pro-gas or pro-life? On Bosnia: Are you for an ethnic war "raging in the heart of Europe" or are you for peace in the Balkans? On the UN: Are you a John Bircher or do you believe we should pay our lawfully assessed dues? On the Kyoto environmental treaty: Are you for responsible use of fossil fuels or for the destruction of the planet?

To be sure, Bill Clinton's team did not invent this approach. As Walter McDougall recounts in his splendid book *Promised Land, Crusader State*, Woodrow Wilson tagged anyone who opposed him on foreign policy—whether the issue was our policy toward Mexico, U.S. neutrality in the early years of World War I, or the League of Nations—as not only thick, but immoral.

By presenting complicated issues as a simple choice between wisdom and ignorance, the Administration divides the opposition.

Many sophisticated Republicans opposed Wilson on the exact form the League would take while seeking compromises that would have brought the United States into it; Wilson smeared them as isolationists out-of-touch with America. Thirty years later Harry Truman painted any opponent of his international programs as unpatriotic or stupid. Dean Acheson, his Secretary of State, popularized the epithet "primitives" for those who opposed his agenda. The Clinton Administration in turn has made this form of arrogance the basis of its foreign-policy arguments.

HOWEVER, the approach can backfire, as it did for Wilson. Some neoconservatives have argued that conservatives should refrain from voicing their reasonable doubts about the Administration's foreign initiatives, lest they inadvertently encourage isolationism. But the Administration's initiatives themselves encourage isolationism. If "leadership" becomes a shibboleth and means lives wasted, money thrown away, and dangers unnecessarily courted, Americans might reasonably conclude that we can do

Mr. Hillen is the Olin Fellow for National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations and an NR *contributing editor.*

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without leadership. If free trade means IMF bailouts, a lot of people will reject both. That's why Pat Buchanan constantly connects these dots.

Republicans are not the only ones who bristle at the Clinton tack. The President lost an estimated thirty Democratic House votes the afternoon that he called Fast Track a "no-brainer." Rep. George Miller (D., Calif.) announced that Clinton "has deeply offended a good portion of this Caucus with his remarks." So, even though the Administration had the right position and the accumulated momentum from the passage of both NAFTA and GATT, it still lost.

It could happen again in impending votes over the IMF bailout, the Bosnia extension, and NATO enlargement. Several old hands are already warning the Administration not to conduct its usual non-debate on these issues—especially NATO. Howard Baker, Sam Nunn, Brent Scowcroft, and Alton Frye wrote recently in the *New York Times* that "it is no service to candor or consensus to invoke the shadow of Versailles, implying that resistance to NATO enlargement would be comparable to Senate rejection of the League of Nations. One doubts that senators will respond well to overdrawn analogies."

Good advice, but you can almost hear the sloganeers at work at the National Security Council. "Are you for peace in Europe, or the rape of Prague?" □

Mr. Clean

John Ashcroft has a sterling ethical record and a socially conservative base. But does he have what it takes to win?

JOHN J. MILLER

SEN. John Ashcroft was hit with the biggest scandal of his political career in the middle of his second term as governor of Missouri. One evening in May 1990, his 12-year-old son needed to look at a book on Elizabethan England for a school assignment. Librarian Monteria Hightower, contacted at home by a security officer eager to help his boss, agreed to drive over and unlock the front door of the state library, which is closed on Sundays. Andrew Ashcroft spent about two and a half hours conducting his research.

The next day, Miss Hightower complained to the press about the inconvenience. Newspapers reported the story, a few editorialists huffed about abuse of power, and Ashcroft quickly apologized. Most folks in Missouri just laughed. Ashcroft's squeaky-clean standards were well known. "If ever a state had a less exciting governor than John Ashcroft," a columnist for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* griped shortly after the library incident, "I never heard about it."

Ashcroft's ethical record has placed him in a strong position to condemn President Clinton for the latest scandal and, hence, to get his own first real boost in the nascent 2000 presidential race. Not many politicians aspire to be the next Jimmy Carter, but Ashcroft does at least in this sense: he too wants to be the unimpeachable straight-shooter who restores people's trust in the Presidency in the wake of a scandal-ridden predecessor.

Ashcroft has big assets in a GOP primary: he served two terms as governor in a Democratic-leaning state, he has a national profile as a senator, and, perhaps most importantly, the Religious Right regard him as one of their own.

Indeed, in the months ahead, Ashcroft has a legitimate chance to emerge as the most electable conservative in the presidential race. But he faces formidable obstacles as well. With a Boy Scout's haircut and a choir boy's politeness, Ashcroft does not make a forceful impression. Some politicians dominate a room; he fades into the wallpaper. His campaign will have to be a victory of doggedness over style, as he works to recreate the Reagan coalition from his base among social conservatives.

Ashcroft first started turning heads in Washington after charges became public that Monica Lewinsky had turned the President's. Most Republicans maintained a code of silence when the former intern first hit the papers, but Ashcroft went into attack mode. "Mr. President," he said at CPAC, the Conservative Political Action Conference, held in January, "if these allegations are true, you have disgraced yourself and the Office of the Presidency, and you should resign now."

The speech drew a strong response from its audience, and an even stronger one from C-SPAN viewer James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family and the second most popular figure among conservative evangelicals (just behind Billy Graham). "*This* is the message!!" Dobson wrote in a note faxed to Ashcroft. In February, in a highly publicized speech decrying the GOP's reluctance to press the social-conservative agenda, Dobson threatened to bolt the party. He even briefly criticized Ashcroft for not speaking out more vigorously against gay rights.

But Dobson generally views Ashcroft with favor. "He's a fine man, and he's been a powerful voice in the Senate," says Dobson, who may endorse political candidates for the first time this fall. Dobson's speech was just another indication of the restiveness of the Religious Right, which Ashcroft could turn to his advantage. In the presidential race, Dobson makes it clear that he prefers Ashcroft and Gary Bauer, whose Family Research Council is a spinoff of Dobson's Colorado-based Focus on the Family. Dobson won't make any formal announcements until Bauer decides whether or not to run.

Ashcroft has a legitimate chance to emerge as the most electable conservative in the presidential race. But he faces formidable obstacles as well.

Mr. Miller is NR*'s national political reporter and author of* The Unmaking of Americans, *which the Free Press will publish in May.*

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Like Bauer, Ashcroft isn't just another politician courting evangelicals; he is part of the team. He's the son of a minister, and an accomplished gospel singer with a striking baritone voice. "Ashcroft isn't simply singing their tune," says one GOP strategist. "He's been playing in the band for a long time." He meets with a small devotional group every morning in his office before the day's business begins, and he likes to give visitors copies of his ten-song tape, *The Gospel (Music) According to John*, which he composed and produced himself. "He is one of the most prayerful men I know," says longtime activist Paul Weyrich, an Ashcroft supporter.

At a Christian Coalition meeting in February, a sizable plurality of organization leaders named Ashcroft as their choice for 2000. Pat Robertson, who wants religious conservatives to rally around a single candidate early in the process, is reportedly looking for a way to endorse Ashcroft soon. Ashcroft's advantage over other candidates of the Religious Right—Robertson in 1988, potentially Bauer in 2000—is that he's a professional politician who has been winning votes all his adult life.

"You always had the feeling he was looking for something up the line, ever since he was young," says one ally. Ashcroft ran for Congress in 1972 and lost. Despite this, Gov. Kit Bond, now Missouri's senior senator, was impressed and appointed him to a vacant state-auditor position in 1973. Ashcroft lost re-election in 1974, but ran successfully for state attorney general two years later. After two terms in that post, he was elected governor in 1984. In his 1988 re-election, he carried 64 per cent of the vote, the best showing of any Missouri governor since the Civil War.

As soon as he won election to the Senate in the 1994 GOP sweep, Ashcroft began discussing among close friends the possibility of running for the White House. He says his disillusionment with the 1997 budget deal, which he opposed, encouraged him to become serious. Although he won't announce his intentions until the end of 1998 or early 1999, Ashcroft acknowledges that he's laying the groundwork. "It's like running the mile," he says. "You have to run the first few laps, and run them hard, before you know if you're really even in the race."

IN this case he'll have to run those laps very hard indeed. A February poll of registered voters in New Hampshire revealed Ashcroft's low name recognition (only 14 per cent of respondents had an opinion of him) and his long odds: 0 per cent named him their first choice for the GOP nomination. "Even John Kasich got 2 per cent," says one Republican strategist. Two per cent did name Ashcroft as their second choice. If he adds an exhausting travel schedule to continued visibility because of the Clinton scandal, his numbers are bound to rise. But skeptics point to his personality and say he won't catch fire.

Despite his ambition, Ashcroft is quiet, unassuming, and not a natural self-promoter. He regularly displays flashes of humor in private and occasionally even in formal settings, but his public persona can seem as flat as the Missouri landscape. Last summer, Steve Forbes—not known as a scintillating orator—upstaged him at a Christian Coalition gathering that was widely billed as Ashcroft's coming-out party. When Ashcroft delivers his stump speech, listeners can get the sense that he would rather be back at his farm in Springfield tinkering with his old tractor or gigging fish on the Osage River.

Ashcroft's strategy is methodically to consolidate his position on the right. In the Senate, he has fought against national testing standards, activist judges, and the nomination of pro-abortion Surgeon General David Satcher—causes dear to the hearts of social conservatives. In 1995, he forced the first-ever floor vote on term limits over Majority Leader Bob Dole's loud objections, and in 1996 he wrote the part of the welfare-reform law allowing states to deliver services through churches and private agencies. "He's a committed conservative," says a top Senate staffer. "I've never seen him trim, not even behind closed doors."

The question is whether Ashcroft can add economic conservatives to his base. Last September, he took an important first step by pushing a bill that would allow workers to deduct their Social Security payments from taxable income. In January, he proposed a broader tax-cut plan that includes this measure and that also would reduce the number of rates from five to four, and lower all rates except the top one, which remains unchanged at 39.6 per cent in a transparent attempt to shield Ashcroft from class-warfare demagoguery.

So far, the plan has won little attention. Close advisors say that Ashcroft will focus more energy on building bridges to the economic Right as April 15 approaches. "The GOP leadership's timidity on taxes is a tragedy," he said at a recent Republican roundup in Biloxi, Miss.—Majority Leader Trent Lott's backyard.

Ashcroft's record as governor may not help. In its 1992 fiscal-policy report card on governors, the Cato Institute gave Ashcroft a C—the same grade it gave liberal New York Gov. Mario Cuomo. "Ashcroft has built a reputation as a fiscal conservative,

John Ashcroft by Roman Genn

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but it may not be deserved," wrote Stephen Moore, the study's author. State expenditures rose annually at a 4 per cent real rate during his terms in office. Ashcroft also approved two gas-tax increases and in 1991 campaigned on behalf of Proposition B, an education-reform and tax-increase package that voters overwhelmingly rejected.

But Ashcroft had to deal with a legislature where Democrats often held a 2 to 1 advantage. And taxes overall in "Mizzoura," as it sounds filtered through Ashcroft's Border State twang, remained low. Missouri had the second-lowest state and local tax burden per capita in the country in 1992, Ashcroft's final year as governor. Moreover, the state remains one of the cheaper places to buy gas in America. On his drives back home from Washington, in fact, Ashcroft has been known to run his fuel tank down to near empty so that he can save a few dollars by filling up on the other side of the Mississippi River.

Gov. Ashcroft also angered many social conservatives for his support of trendy educational theories. The so-called Parents as Teachers program, for instance, had "parent educators" visiting the homes of pre-schoolers. "It's fair to say that John did not see the mutations of outcome-based education soon enough," says Rep. James Talent (R., Mo.), who served in the state legislature during the Ashcroft administration. "But nobody believes that he wants a self-esteem curriculum." His work in the Senate has mollified former critics. One of these, Eagle Forum leader Phyllis Schlafly, is now a fan. "The fights from six years ago are way off the radar screen now," she says.

In 1985, Missouri's two Major League baseball teams, the Kansas City Royals and the St. Louis Cardinals, played in the World Series. Instead of rooting for one team over the other, Gov. Ashcroft cheered for both. He even made a special hat with bills on either side, which he flipped around between innings. "I was always for the team that was batting," he says. For some politicians, that might signal indecisiveness or double-dealing. "There's another way of looking at it," says Rep. Roy Blunt (R., Mo.). "John was always on offense." He'll need to stay that way if he's going to follow in the footsteps of that other evangelical former governor from twenty years ago. □

Shaky Foundation

The Left doesn't have to worry about its funding stream—as long as rich capitalists keep creating foundations.

NEAL B. FREEMAN

DAVID Packard died on March 26, 1996, after a long and extraordinarily productive life. Engineer, entrepreneur, public servant, patriot, Packard was one of the exemplary citizens of the American Century. His career was a story of innovation and enterprise, a triumph of the free market. What is happening to his foundation is a story of money diverted to trendy liberal causes, a triumph of America's philanthropic establishment.

Mr. Freeman, executive producer for the Blackwell Corporation, is also chairman of the Foundation Management Institute in Arlington, Va.

Dave Packard graduated from Stanford in 1934, taking a degree in electrical engineering. Soon, he and a classmate, Bill Hewlett, opened for business in the first manufacturing site for their fledgling enterprise, Packard's one-car garage. The garage had everything they needed—a drill press, a soldering iron, and room to dream and tinker. It is now a California Historical Landmark, the birthplace of what came to be known as Silicon Valley.

The partners tossed a coin, named their company Hewlett-Packard, and opened for business on January 1, 1939. Products came tumbling out of the garage and, then, out of the first HP building, a ten thousand-square-foot space configured to the specs of a grocery store (just in case the electronics business didn't work out): signal generators, radar jammers for the military, microwave gear, high-speed frequency counters for radio stations.

The Packard Foundation's two primary enthusiasms are population control and the environment.

They were working the leading edge of a high-tech industry that had no infrastructure, no experience base, no Gilderian theology. By 1958, HP was doing more than $30 million worth of business a year, with 1,778 employees putting out 373 different products. The growth accelerated in the next few years as HP broadened its product line and extended its reach across the country and around the globe. By the mid Sixties, Hewlett-Packard was a Fortune 500 company doing $365 million worth of business a year. At the end of the decade, David Packard took on a different challenge—becoming Richard Nixon's Deputy Secretary of Defense at the height of the Vietnam War and the protest against it. Packard was repaid for this act of patriotism with years of personal abuse.

In due course he returned to Palo Alto, and the company took off on another great ride. In 1984, Hewlett-Packard introduced a high-priced, high-end product called the HP LaserJet printer. It was one of those moments that pass into business lore: the gold-plated luxury product transforming itself, even as you watched, into a necessity of modern life.

In 1996, the year of Packard's death, HP did almost $40 billion worth of business and was one of the most admired companies in the world. Packard stayed on two boards until the end of his life, those of the American Enterprise Institute and the Hoover Institution at Stanford.

Sometime in the next few weeks, the Packard estate will transfer the final tranche of HP stock to the David and

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Lucile Foundation, which was founded in 1964. The gift will make the foundation the nation's third largest, its $8.9-billion corpus trailing only those of the Lilly Endowment ($12.7 billion) and the Ford Foundation ($9.4 billion), and far surpassing those of such big philanthropic names as Pew ($4.5) and MacArthur ($3.1).

If anything, the raw numbers understate the impact of the Packard funds: they are fresh and uncommitted and so can have a tremendous impact at the margin of public policy. It is not too much to say that the Packard bequest is the most important development in late-twentieth-century philanthropy. The assumption among David Packard's many friends and admirers was that he would in death support the causes that had animated his life.

A REVIEW of the grants made through the first quarter of 1997 (the most recent period for which comprehensive data are available) confirms that the Packard Foundation has indeed pressed a large footprint in the philanthropic sand—but in a way that runs counter to Packard's life and convictions. Big new programs are being funded with big new Packard grants, but not in the areas of entrepreneurship, democratic capitalism, and national security. The Foundation's two primary enthusiasms are population control and the environment.

The mug shots of the organizations receiving grants are familiar: the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, International Planned Parenthood, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (for pro-choice messages on television), Population Action International. Perhaps more significantly, the Foundation supports dozens of smaller groups along the same lines. The Alan Guttmacher Institute in New York received $1 million, a transforming development, presumably, in the life of a niche advocacy organization.

To review the Foundation's environmental program, in turn, is to flip through the rap sheets of Green recidivists. World Wildlife Fund, Wilderness Society, Environmental Defense Fund, World Resources Institute, and so on. The list of beneficiaries also includes scores of new or obscure groups with names that might have alarmed a tough-minded engineer—the Center for Eco-

You deserve to know the facts about....

"Land for Peace"

Can it solve the problems of the Middle East?

There has been much emphasis for years on the "land for peace" formula to solve the long-simmering problems of the Middle East. Translating this slogan into plain English means that Israel should surrender Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank"), Gaza and the Golan to the Arabs. They would establish a Palestinian state. Once that happened, it is thought that peace and tranquility would soon come to the troubled Middle East.

What are the facts?

■ The concept of "land for peace" is a totally new one in the history of the world. It was formulated for one purpose only, namely to pressure Israel to give up territories that it has administered since the Six-Day War of 1967. By its victory in that war, Israel wound up in possession of these territories. Contrary to what many are led to believe, the "West Bank", the focus of today's attention, had never been part of any Arab country. It was part of Palestine, a territorial unit that, by the Mandate of the League of Nations and in line with the Balfour Declaration, had been designated as a national home for the Jewish people.

■ Thus, while the concept of "land for peace" is a brand-new one, the concept that to the victor belong the spoils is as old as history itself and had really never been questioned before. Our own country, of course, following its Manifest Destiny, has benefited greatly and has consolidated its territory by applying this motto. But Israel followed a different path. From the day of victory in 1967, it waited for an offer of peace from the Arabs. But that offer never came. Instead, following the war, The Arabs pronounced their three unalterable "nos:" no recognition, no negotiation, and no peace with Israel.

■ In 1977, President Sadat of Egypt traveled to Jerusalem and presented a peace plan. The Israelis eagerly embraced his suggestion. In exchange for peace and normalization of relations, Israel returned to Egypt the vast Sinai peninsula, together with the city of Yamit; some of the most advanced military installations in the world; the port and naval installations of Sharm-el-Sheik, which safeguards Israel's access to its port of Eilat; and the oil fields Israel had developed and which had made Israel self-sufficient in its energy requirements. And, of course, Israel also gave up the natural buffer against aggression that the Suez Canal and the strategic depth of the Sinai itself provided. It was a first in history. Never before in the chronicle of mankind had the victor returned conquered territory to the vanquished in order to attain peace.

■ One would expect that the concept of "land for peace" would work both ways. After all, should not the Arabs also make some territorial sacrifices for peace? Unfortunately, that is not the case. Every inch of land held by the Arabs is considered "holy Arab soil" and its possession by the "infidels" is inadmissible, intolerable, a blasphemy and a case for "jihad" (holy war). No compromise, no concession is ever possible. Sale of land to Jews is punishable by death. A far as the Arabs are concerned the "land for peace" principle is basically a one-way street.

■ The "land for peace" formulation is now mostly applied to Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank"), Gaza and the Golan Heights. Israel's foes, but also some of its friends, urge Israel to yield these regions to the Arabs in exchange for "peace." But there is no peace, and no peace will come about by Israel's giving up these areas of vital strategic importance to those who are its sworn enemies and who have declared over and over again that they wish to use this land as their launching pad for the final attempt at the destruction of Israel. The conflict in the area is not only between Israel and the "Palestinians." It is first of all between Israel and the hostile Arab nations. With the exception of Egypt,and now also of Jordan, virtually all of them are still in a state of war with Israel.

To none of the Arab countries has it ever occurred that *they* might trade land for peace—as, for instance, yielding the "West Bank", Gaza or the Golan to Israel for the sake of peace and tranquility. Egypt certainly made no territorial or other concessions for the sake of peace and neither did Jordan. Both countries drove very hard bargains to which the Israelis, in their unending quest for peace, acceded. There is never any accommodation on the part of the Arabs, never even a gesture of tentative friendship. For the victor to yield land for peace to the vanquished is a new idea—who knows, it might even be a good one. But it surely would have to work both ways in order to be valid and effective.

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system Survival, for example, or the Center for Resource Economics, or organizations beyond number propelled by the incantatory power of the word "sustainable."

The Foundation, in short, appears well on its way to becoming the loudest voice in the world on the leftward side of two of our most heated debates. All in David Packard's name. How did this happen?

In 1987, Packard wrote a letter to his four children and his senior foundation manager expressing his "general thoughts" on the distribution of grants. The letter has never been released, but soon after Packard's death the Foundation announced that it was "exploring new directions," which suggests that the thoughts were very general indeed. (When I asked a Foundation representative if Packard was personally pro-choice, for instance, she replied, "I don't know.")

A number of possible explanations have been bruited about: Packard was indulging family members whom he felt he had neglected while building his business; he had come down with the rich-white-guilt flu; he was being snookered by slick philanthropic managers; he had gotten old and lost touch.

Whichever of these may have been the case, the Packard Foundation has followed a brisk, three-step ritual frequently seen in the nonprofit world. Step 1: Money pours into a foundation from a pro-market, pro-Western donor. Step 2: The funds are processed by the professional philanthropic class. Step 3: The funds then pour out to groups and causes that ignore, rebuke, or attempt to overturn the values to which the donor devoted his life.

The friends of Henry Ford would recognize this sad story, as also the friends of J. Howard Pew, John D. MacArthur —and, alas, now David Packard. □

The Price Is Right

Deflation has a bad name. But when productivity is increasing, prices should be allowed to fall.

GEORGE SELGIN

IT'S official: We should all start worrying about deflation. That, at least, is the message most listeners took from Alan Greenspan's January 3 speech before the American Economic Association. The Consumer Price Index rose only 1.7 per cent last year, and, if critics of its current method of calculation are correct, consumer price inflation was probably close to zero. Producers' prices actually fell last year. By this reckoning, deflation really is staring us in the face. Steve Forbes, Robert Reich, the editors of the *Wall Street Journal*, and the chief economist at Merrill Lynch have all explained that, inflation having been vanquished, "deflationary pressures" are the new threat.

Mr. Selgin is an associate professor at the University of Georgia and author of the Institute for Economic Affairs Hobart Paper, Less Than Zero: The Case for a Falling Price Level in a Growing Economy.

The Federal Reserve can prevent deflation. It need only expand its purchases of government securities, which it pays for with newly created Federal Reserve dollars that are subsequently deposited in commercial banks. In recent years, this expansionary monetary policy has more than compensated for the deflationary effects of productivity gains, replacing what might have been mild deflation with mild inflation. But the fact that the Fed can prevent deflation doesn't mean it should. Right now, we should be welcoming a long-awaited opportunity to watch the cost of living decline—something it has not done since 1955. The idea that deflation must be avoided at all costs traces back to myths that arose in the 1930s, when the Fed did allow it to proceed too far.

Myth #1: Deflation always means depression or recession. Actually, it depends on the cause. The deflation of the early 1930s was a genuine disaster, involving massive declines in production and employment. But what made that deflation so painful, besides its severity, was its underlying cause: a collapse of the money supply, which in turn led to a collapse in consumer spending. Deflation can also be a consequence of improvements in productivity, in which case it needn't be harmful at all. Such "benign," productivity-driven deflation was a common occurrence during the last part of the nineteenth century, when people routinely looked forward to goods' getting cheaper. Today, with productivity growing at more than 2 per cent annually, prices ought to be falling concomitantly.

Myth #2: Falling prices mean falling wages and earnings. Not if they're based on improvements in productivity. When productivity rises, the cost of producing goods and services declines. Prices of goods and services can then be cut painlessly, without any absolute decline in business earnings or wages. Last year, for example, workers' average weekly earnings rose by about 4 per cent, or more than twice the official rate of inflation. Had monetary policy allowed consumer prices to fall 2 per cent—roughly the rate of overall productivity growth—average money wages would have risen slightly above their 1996 level. But because of lower prices, average *real* wages would still have risen by more than 2 per cent, just as much as their recorded increase under mild inflation.

Myth #3: Deflation harms debtors. Again, not necessarily. Suppose, for example, that over the course of one year productivity unexpectedly rises 2 per cent and prices therefore unexpectedly fall 2 per cent. Then, although loans would be repaid in dollars more valuable than before, the dollars the borrowers made with the loan would also be more valuable. On the other hand, a productivity-driven deflation is

The idea that deflation must be avoided traces back to myths that arose in the 1930s.

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very kind to pensioners and others living on fixed incomes: When lowered costs of production are reflected in lowered prices, persons on fixed incomes share in overall gains that would otherwise be enjoyed only by persons with flexible incomes. Why shouldn't the benefits of improved productivity be passed on to *all* consumers?

MYTH #4: A stable price level serves best to avoid booms and busts. When productivity isn't changing, a stable price level is indeed consistent with overall stability of consumer spending, business earnings, and profits. But all this changes when productivity is growing. In that case, monetary policy can keep the price level from falling only by artificially boosting consumer spending and industry earnings and, in the short run at least, profits. Although this might not sound so bad, it actually means trouble: high profits are fine when only certain industries experience them and others suffer losses, for then they serve as a useful signal for the reorientation of investment. But high profits all around are the result of unneeded Fed additions to bank reserves, which artificially lower interest rates. That, in turn, leads to overspeculation in asset markets, including real estate and stocks. Then comes a recession, when bad investments are liquidated.

During the late 1920s, for example, the Fed strove to maintain a stable price level despite ongoing improvements in productivity. The result was one of the more dramatic stock-market booms in history. Several noteworthy economists at the time urged the Fed to let the price level fall, thereby preventing the boom from getting out of hand. The Fed did not heed this advice until 1928, when a gigantic stock-market bubble was already set to burst.

Most economists now agree that it is a good idea to allow the price level to rise somewhat when productivity suffers a serious setback—as it did, for example, following the OPEC-sponsored oil shortages of the 1970s. The arguments for letting the price level fall in response to improvements in productivity are less well appreciated, but no less sound.

Everyone accepts the basic principle when it comes to particular firms and industries. Recent reductions in computer prices, for instance, have harmed neither the computer industry nor the U.S. economy as a whole. But the computer industry is only one of many that have witnessed substantial gains in productivity in recent years. Indeed, there is hardly a good or service that isn't being produced more efficiently today than was the case in years past. So what harm could there possibly be in allowing *general* improvements in productivity to be reflected in *general* price cuts? The answer is, No obvious harm at all, apart from the psychological anguish felt by certain Fed officials and economic pundits every time the CPI threatens to decline.

In a passage of his speech that seems to have gone unnoticed by most commentators, Mr. Greenspan conceded that deflation is not dangerous so long as it is based on overall gains in productivity. Well, overall annual gains in productivity have been the rule rather than the exception in the U.S. economy; and recent productivity growth has been especially pronounced. Thus, far from being something to fear, steady, mild deflation is something we ought to welcome. Mr. Greenspan, bring on those lower prices. The doomsayers can cry all the way to the supermarket. □

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Dancing Fools

You can do just about anything you like in Gotham—except dance in bars.

DEROY MURDOCK

MANHATTAN

"NO DANCING," says the sign above the stage at Manny's Car Wash, the legendary blues bar at Third Avenue and 88th Street. Directly below this admonition, guitarist Hiram Bullock and bassist Will Lee are jumping up and down onstage like V-8 pistons.

But the sign is not a joke, like the ones at some bars that read: "Beware Pickpockets and Loose Women." It is a command, based on a 1926 law that forbids revelers to dance in bars and restaurants that lack cabaret licenses. The dancing needn't be elaborate, Rockettes-style musical numbers. A pair of patrons twirling to a love song can get a bar fined—or worse.

I ask Manny's manager, Mike Winters, how much dancing it would take to get his place busted. "This much," he says, pointing to the crowd of about 180 youngish patrons swaying back and forth as Bullock and Lee sing gleefully about "a bean burrito, black beans, and rice." A few of them are snapping their fingers or clapping their hands.

"Even if we didn't have live music and were playing CDs on the stereo, we could get nailed if customers did this," Winters says, bobbing his head up and down. That means Mike and his brother, Brad, who opened Manny's in 1990, have to be as averse to dancing as the strictest Ayatollah: "I don't encourage dancing and don't allow bands to talk about dancing," says Brad.

Now that New York City's violent criminals are on the run, the New York Police Department, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and local community boards are conducting a War on Dancing. Unlike much of the city's successful quality-of-life campaign to reduce noise and calm midnight madness, this particular effort seems to have been hatched by Captain Queeg.

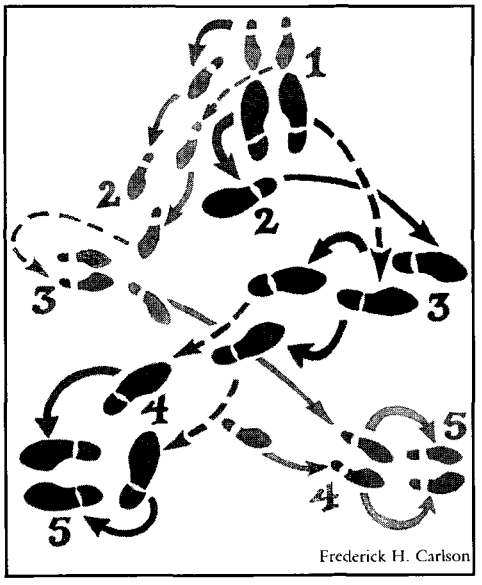
"It doesn't matter if you have a jukebox, a radio, or a singer," says Sergeant Timothy Sikorski of the NYPD's Sixth Precinct. "If you have people dancing and you don't have a cabaret license, that's illegal."

According to Sikorski, who enforces cabaret laws in Greenwich Village, the mere act of dancing, independent of noise or any other nuisance, is enough to trigger a response. The NYPD hands over information to the Department of Consumer Affairs so that it can cite establishments in violation of the law. "If Consumer Affairs cites them twice," Sikorski adds, "they can close the place."

Consider Café Iguana, a since-renamed restaurant on Park Avenue South where a 16-foot-long crystal iguana named Ava Gardner once dangled over the bar. This mighty reptile proved no match for Mark Green, then New York City's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, now Public Advocate and a U.S. Senate hopeful.

Accompanied by journalists, Commissioner Green personally padlocked the place after several patrons were spotted dancing near their tables back in April 1992. Fines and two days of lost business cost Café Iguana over $10,000.

More recently, Consumer Affairs targeted Hogs & Heifers, a bar in Manhattan's meat-packing district where patrons traditionally have stomped their boots on the bar to the country music from the jukebox.



Frederick H. Carlson

In October 1996, Hogs & Heifers got a $100 fine for "unlicensed cabaret." Owner Michelle Dell says she and her late husband posted "No Dancing" signs and asked bouncers to discourage patrons from responding to the music. But there was just so much they could do. "What do you do, call 911 and say, 'I have a guy in my place dancing'?" Mrs. Dell asks. "The police show up and say, 'We're not your personal security force.' You're damned if you do, and damned if you don't."

After undercover Consumer Affairs officials observed yet more dancing, they returned on a Thursday night in February 1997. "They had firetrucks outside and six police cars. They definitely were coming to shut us down," Mrs. Dell recalls. "They were very aggressive and extremely hostile. You would think this was a drug raid.

"They padlocked us. We had to pay for the padlock and they weren't going to let us open over a three-day weekend . . . We paid a $3,000 fine and had to sign a release saying we would not fight this with Consumer Affairs. Your doors don't get opened until you win. So what do you do? You plead guilty, pay the fine, and re-open."

That's about when the Dells decided to get a cabaret license. "When all is said and done," Mrs. Dell says, "this cost us about $150,000 between the expediting fees, the legal fees, the fines, renovations, architectural fees, and licensing fees."

It's a point not lost on bars that already have the license. "It's common knowledge that anonymous complainers often are competitors" of offending establishments, says nightclub attorney Robert Bookman. "People who have cabaret licenses don't like that their competitors without licenses have dancing and are getting away with it."

There are much more straightforward ways to address quality-of-life issues than through this Prohibition-era relic. If a ruckus at a bar creates a nuisance for neighbors, the police should be able to enforce a reasonable noise code and, if need be, cite rambunctious patrons for disorderly conduct. Otherwise, patrons should be free to sway, nod their heads—and even move their feet. □

Mr. Murdock is an MSNBC columnist and Senior Fellow with the Atlas Economic Research Foundation in Fairfax, Va.

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WM. F. BUCKLEY JR.

I WAS both pleased and grateful when Dartmouth's Hillel group last week voted to co-sponsor my appearance tonight, and honored that the Roth Center has planned a reception for me after my talk.

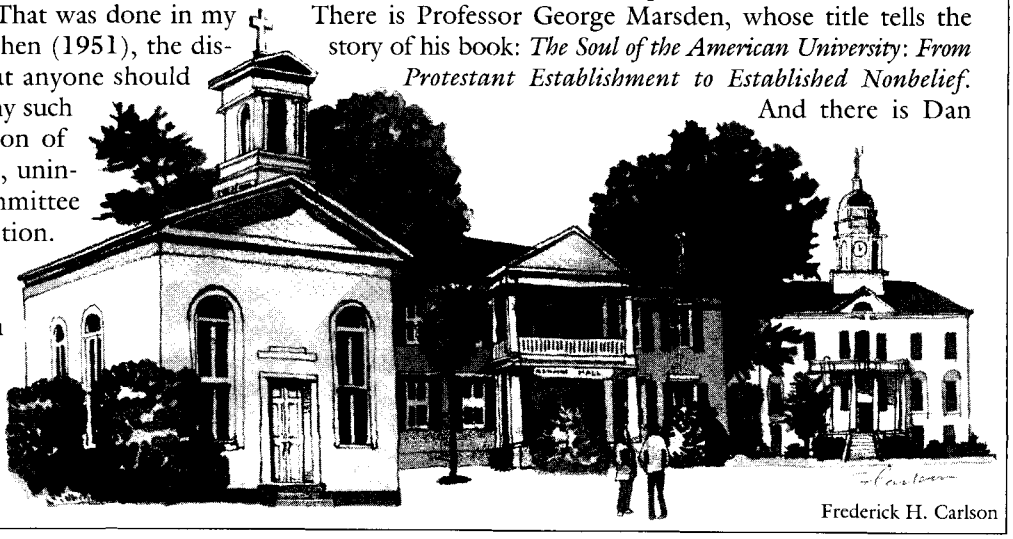
I begin, in part for my own sake, by reviewing the circumstances of my visit here. It happens that my talk tonight is only the most recent—who knows, perhaps the last—in a series of occasional appearances on this campus that began in the mid Fifties, bespeaking a common disposition, Dartmouth's and my own, to endure pain. I am especially anxious to move step by step because I have felt the need to clarify my own thinking on the subject of Christianity and higher education. The invitation from Mr. Parker was to expand on a short piece I did for the *New York Times* in November. It was triggered by the inauguration of the Roth Center here and attendant revelations about Dartmouth's past. Had I, Mr. Parker asked me in his letter, weighed sufficiently the implications of what I wrote on that occasion? I had written that in seeking to amend past injustices to Jewish students, Dartmouth ought not to feel any need to forswear its own traditional mission, which is (was?), to use the freighted word I so innocently used a few weeks ago, to Christianize its students.

The response to my summons in the *New York Times* was at several levels. The first was silence. A silence here amused, there awestruck. The critical reaction was two generations more wizened than when I made my first onward-Christian-soldiers charge. That was done in my book *God and Man at Yale*. Back then (1951), the dismay of college spokesmen was that anyone should think there was any need to issue any such summons. The religious orientation of Yale, they insisted, was under way, uninterrupted; all flags flying. A committee was deputized to explore the question. Its chairman reported that "there is today [at Yale], more than ever, widespread realization that religion alone can give meaning and purpose to modern life."

But the reaction now is of a very different kind. My teaching assistant at Yale—in November I was teaching a seminar there in English composition—is himself a Yale graduate, son and brother of Dartmouth graduates. He wrote to me asking whether I could seriously envision the Jewish president of Dartmouth uttering distinctively Christian preachments on life and manners to Dartmouth's student body. His position was not entirely antagonistic. The young Jewish scholar derided what he labeled the "cartoonishly politically correct" practices at Dartmouth of in effect eliminating "Silent Night" as a Christmastime Glee Club offering. He deplores the contortionist lengths, as described in my current book, that my own prep-school alma mater, the Millbrook School, goes to to conduct one hour's Christmas ceremonies without a single reference to Christmas, let alone to Christ.

At another level, the questions that arose were fundamental questions. The first was the sheer inconceivability that a university with feet so solidly encased in the concrete of secularism could be born again. Sure, one correspondent observed, it is true that as recently as in 1946 Dartmouth President Ernest Martin Hopkins reiterated his understanding that the continuing obligation of Dartmouth was to encourage Christian (Protestant) belief in its students. But since then, everything has changed. Yes, that's true. Almost everything has changed.

About the attitudes and conduct of universities that once hewed to the Christian line quite a lot has been written. There is Professor George Marsden, whose title tells the story of his book: *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief.* And there is Dan



Frederick H. Carlson

Mr. Buckley is an NR *editor-at-large.*

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A. Oren's *Joining the Club: A History of Jews and Yale*, which tells of flat-out exclusion of tenure for Jewish faculty in the social sciences and the humanities in those benighted days.

But a trend in the multiculturalist direction was under way. Admissions policies broadened, as if to reflect internal reorientations. In my book on Yale I had remarked the dilution of the Christian tradition. It was no longer the institutional lifeblood at Yale. I quoted from the inaugural address of the scholar who served as president of Yale during my undergraduate years. Charles Seymour had said in 1937, "I call on all members of the faculty as members of a thinking body, freely to recognize the tremendous validity and power of the teachings of Christ in our life-and-death struggle against the forces of selfish materialism." Could any president of a major American university today, even assuming he privately nursed the convictions Mr. Seymour expressed, use such language at an inaugural ceremony? Just imagine hearing such formulations from the next president of Dartmouth. The repercussions would be immense: perplexity and even outrage among the faculty; almost certainly a lawsuit backed by the American Civil Liberties Union, complaining that 15 per cent of Dartmouth's budget was being sent in by the Federal Government, some of it wrested from the pockets of honest and hardworking skeptics, incensed now by their involuntary subsidy of that swinging evangelical, freshly installed as president of Dartmouth by a sleepy board of trustees ignorant of modern times.

A third response was simply curious. It asked, in effect, What can be done to advance Christianity—assuming the will to do anything at all? Can Christianity be practiced corporately at college level without engendering, at best, intercredal incivility; at worst, confrontational hostility?

For convenience, in this brief exploration, I omit mention of religions other than Christianity and Judaism. I ignore whatever complications Catholic Christianity could hypothetically present. No doubt there are curricular ambitions aborning from Buddhism and Islam. I intend no condescension in ignoring them. I do so purely for analytical convenience.

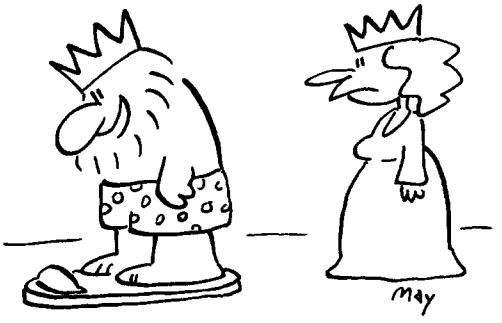
The spotlight, as focused last November by President Freedman, is on Christianity and Judaism, and I am supposed to contemplate the question, What in fact could be done? We return to what precipitated the exchange in the *New York Times*. It was at the formal opening of the Roth Center for Jewish Life and Culture that President Freedman disclosed the history of Dartmouth's quota on Jewish students. Now the presumed design of the Roth Center is to invigorate Jewish life and culture, which certainly includes Jewish religion. It was the official enthusiasm shown by Mr. Freedman and others for this enterprise that prompted me to ask whether, even as the Roth Center is designed to Judaize Jews, Dartmouth mightn't explore more vigorous means of Christianizing non-Jews. I asked, "In welcoming students from other creeds, is it expected that a college must forswear its own traditional creed?" I went on to ask the question which I judge it is my primary responsibility here tonight to explore. As I put it, "Is an effort to inculcate Christian values and Christian teaching a morphological act of anti-Semitism?"

That question needs to be probed at levels religious, social, and political.

IT IS useful to begin by asking what it is that Judaism and Christianity have in common. The answer is a great deal. Irving Kristol put it succinctly: "Like the greatest Jewish theologian of this century, Franz Rosenzweig, I see Christianity as a sister religion to Judaism, as a form of 'Judaism for the Gentiles.' " The two faiths have in common the (monotheistic) belief in a single God. The Old Testament is the structural and historical springboard of Christianity. The division comes in primarily on the question of Jesus, revered by Christians as the Incarnation, ignored—or reviled—by Jews as a failed prophet at best, an impostor at worst.

Whether Franz Rosenzweig was correct in calling them sister religions is a matter of perspective. But it is useful to bear in mind that day-to-day differences are mostly liturgical. Moral codes, with differing emphases on faith and on the laws, are held in common by the two faiths. There is no sovereign social commandment spoken in the Old Testament that is profaned or defiled—how could it be so?—in the New Testament. The deportment of Jews obedient to their laws, and of Christians faithful to theirs, would expose no important differences in conduct.

But credal differences do tend to generate social differences, and some of these have political faces. The overwhelming datum here, dominating all emotion and much thought, is the history of racial and ethnic discrimination. From the practice of it in the United States, salutary lessons have been drawn. From the genocidal lengths to which discrimination has been practiced abroad, we learn terrifying truths. The memory of discriminatory practices, as for instance at Dartmouth and Yale, engendered credal fears and derivative political stands. Most conspicuous of them, in the past half-century, have been the fear of hegemonic concentrations of religious authority, and a lively concern for minorities. The relative unanimity of Jewish concern for the beleaguered Negro after the war is widely understood as an expression of fraternal support from one American group itself once beleaguered, to another still suffering.



"Two more pounds off—the era of big government really is over!"

Conspicuous also, in this survey, is the relative solidarity of Jewish objection to Christian practices except when done under formally Christian auspices. In support of this bias, a whole constitutional vocabulary sprang up. The word Christian is not used, but Christianity is the special target of the judicial inquisition, even though it is ostensibly comprehensive in its anti-

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religious reach. It is a ban that extends equally to Jewish impertinences in public situations. Thus in 1989 the constitutional objection to an invocation at the Commencement ceremony of a public junior high school in Rhode Island—because it was pronounced, not by a minister or priest (their benedictions would also be forbidden), but by a rabbi. The Supreme Court solemnly weighed in—*Lee* v. *Weisman*, June 24, 1992—on the unconstitutionality of the rabbinical blessing and, even as we speak, is hearing the dolorous cries of an affronted petitioner in Alabama. There the objection is to the exposure of the Ten Commandments in a courthouse in Etowah County, a complaint that is chugging its way up the shadowy judicial ladder in serene expectation of coming, finally, on the liberating incandescence of that clause in the First Amendment that beams out its guarantees against an established national religion.

What is this strange commotion, in the name of protection from a national church? Six years ago, in my book *In Search of Anti-Semitism*, I relayed the views, once again, of Irving Kristol. Surveying the religion-in-schools scene he noticed a "tension . . . now building up between Jews and Christians [which] has very little to do with traditional discrimination, and everything to do with efforts by liberals—among whom, I regret to say, Jews are both numerous and prominent—to establish a wall between religion and society in the guise of maintaining the wall between church and state." Mr. Kristol went on to say that he himself believes "the secular era [is] . . . fading, that Jews (at least," as he put it, "those who remain Jews) will become more Jewish, Christians more Christian, Moslems more Moslem, Hindus more Hindu, etc." He concluded: "There is a majority culture in this country, it is Christian, white, middle-class. Jews and nonbelievers (I am both) are outsiders to some extent in that culture."

IF Irving Kristol is correct in saying that there is a majority culture and that it is Christian, what of the modern university? Is it only an enclave, pure and simple? Dartmouth, like so many of the elite universities, has Christian roots. Are these roots relevant to its current purposes? The temptation in answering that question—the easiest way out, and perhaps the only way out—is to say, No: they are irrelevant. But surely before we opt for instant deracination we should give a little thought to the Dartmouth of Ernest Martin Hopkins—as to the Yale of Charles Seymour—and ask: What happened? What happened that makes it somehow absurd even to hint at a corporate commitment to a religious faith, when to do so was commonplace in mid century?

There have been two groundswells, one ideological, the second philosophical. On the first of these we have already touched, the idea that to show preference for any one religion is somehow unfair, aggressive, inconsistent with the very idea of equal rights for all religions. But that ideological perspective, an extension of the egalitarian imperative, brushes up against quite conventionally accepted rights of majorities, the right—cited, in this instance, by Irving Kristol—of a community to acknowledge the symbols and pronounce the ideals of the majority. This is of course the accepted practice in public life, in democratic politics, where the majority elects the leader and sets congregational rules that prevail during the tenure of that administration. It is not challenged that a college founded by evangelical Christians, or by and for observant Jews, should be free to organize college life and curriculum consistent with the indoctrinational ends of the institution. On the contrary, that is expected.

But the dividing line is quickly drawn. We begin by saying of a teaching institution that it is "secular." I.e., worldly, rather than spiritual. This inflection is not emasculating when narrowly applied. Nobody expects courses in Christian physics. The handiest next device for turning the curriculum loose is of course "academic freedom." The arguments for academic freedom are quickly marshaled and very persuasive. They include the doctrine's usefulness in academic research, an intellectual mobility we quickly appreciate for the most obvious reasons: If there is no stated objective to be achieved, no confining discipline to repress us, the researcher's freedom is enhanced. All very well, but of course at some point the offices of a teaching college assert themselves: there are one thousand students who enter Dartmouth as freshmen and will want, four years later, to be acquainted with some of the deposit of learning of the last three millennia, and perhaps with a few coordinates that enhance the meaning of life itself, and some knowledge of the religion that was an animating source of republican idealism. Any doubts we have on the matter can be settled by reading the speeches of Martin Luther King Jr., whose life we celebrate while tending to ignore what he always cited—as Abraham Lincoln did—as the ground of his idealism.

What happened that makes it somehow absurd even to hint at a corporate commitment to a religious faith, when to do so was commonplace in mid century?

Academic freedom, fifty years ago, was most frequently acclaimed as protecting a scholar indifferent to or dissenting from establishmentarian religion or economics or politics. But more, really, was going on during this period. The academy's own establishment was gestating, and it is now pretty well fullborn. The new canon rules that religion is, well, appropriately left behind in our culture of science.

WHAT evidence do we have of this progressive demotion of religion by the culture of science? Professor David Hollinger of the University of California at Berkeley has published a book—*Science, Jews, and Secular Culture*—from which much that is informative is conveniently derived. Jeffrey Hart, professor emeritus of English here at Dartmouth, summarizes one of Hollinger's points. It is that, at the moment, the secular perspective has "won the cognitive battle," to use the relevant language. The religious perspective has for the time being lost the battle to be thought of as "true" "in the sense that $E=mc^2$ is true," to use Professor Hart's language.

Now, Professor Hollinger is telling us—and he is a very

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learned sociologist—that in the substantive sense science is thought by academic thinkers to be "true" on a playing field where the religious world view is not true. That this is the academic consensus is hard to deny. The idea that Christianity might be true is not even entertained in most academic laboratories, let alone seriously explored. "Christianity marched into the modern era as the strongest, most institutionally endowed cultural program in the Western world," writes Hollinger. He continues, "The people in charge of this program tried through a variety of methods, some more coercive than others, to implant Christian doctrines and practices in as much of the globe as they could. Yet, as the centuries went forward, this extraordinary empire of power/knowledge lost some of the ground it had once held. Christianity at the end of the twentieth century—the 'Christian Century,' prophesied by the Protestant hegemonists at its start—is less triumphant in the North Atlantic West than it was in 1500 or 1700 or 1900."

The idea that Christianity might be true is not even entertained in most academic laboratories, let alone seriously explored.

NOTWITHSTANDING this dispiriting narrative, there is the perverse refusal, if the phrase is correct, of religion to perish by any sword, not physical, not archaeological, not anthropological, not biochemical, not historical, not, indeed, philosophical. Professor Hollinger appears, in passing, to acknowledge as much when he writes, ". . . Christianity's continuing adherents include some of the most thoughtful and learned men and women in the world—as I believe they do—[but] the [secularist] trend is nonetheless real, and the historian's obligation to understand it is no less compelling."

He cites Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Mr. Kuhn argues that science has always been a collective enterprise. That is, scientific researchers do not go off in individual directions to discover this or that. Rather they pursue paths collectively agreed upon by what might be thought of as a "paradigm." The extant scientific paradigm is satisfied that present research "covers the facts." Most scientists, most of the time—we are to understand—pursue their research within the going paradigm. Researchers go happily forward, making advances and exacting refinements, until suddenly the circle comes up that won't fit in the square hole that stares them in the face. The effort is then made to stretch the going paradigm, but finally a new one is needed to "cover the new facts," even as the Newtonian paradigm had to be changed to make way for subatomic particles and high-velocity physics, which amounted to a new "wing" on the Newtonian paradigm and a new direction for collective research, leading, I am reliably informed, to quantum mechanics. And now the question is at least tantalizing whether the anthropic paradigm will assert itself not merely as convenient to astrophysicists, but perhaps as undeniable.

I am ill at ease when dealing with physics, but I think that the question being raised is suitably addressed to the layman's generic curiosity. The question is, Which of two alternative explanations of human life is more plausible, that put forward by materialist evolution, or that which argues a superintending intelligence? The explorations are greatly varied, but notice is dramatically drawn to the conference of international scientists that met in Cracow in 1973 where Professor Brandon Carter rather timidly advanced the view that what we now know about the physical narrative of our cosmos is that one day it did in fact begin, with what they call the Big Bang, and that multiple variables needed to play out in bizarre coordination with each other by which only a single apparent purpose was served, namely to make possible human life. He called this the anthropic principle. I am benumbed by numbers on galactic scales, but even minds primitively educated in science are arrested by some of the data currently going the rounds. What is the probability that a bullet randomly fired from the earth will hit a one-inch target at a distance of twenty billion light years? The answer, I'm told, is 10 to the 60th power. Do we know how many atoms there are in the known universe? Well, *I* know, because I've been told that the answer is 10 to the 80th power. I am then told that scientists consider any random event as unlikely as 10 to the 50th power to be, quite simply, impossible; which makes daunting the idea of the monkey randomly typing down the passage from *Macbeth* that closes with, "Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing." The chances of that happening can be put down at 10 to the 536th power.

But all of this tells us nothing more than that there are paradigms on the move, and that alert scholarship must inevitably take these matters into account, or run the risk run by those blind to the demonstrations of Galileo. To be sure, to acknowledge that there was a Prime Mover is less than to certify either the God of Moses or the God of Christ. But it is heartening for those drawn to a religious view of the world to know that the operative paradigm is no reason for their current dishevelment. "I see it as one of the greatest ironies of this ironical time," Malcolm Muggeridge wrote 15 years ago, "that the Christian message should be withdrawn for consideration just when it is most desperately needed to save men's reason, if not their souls. It is as though a Salvation Army band, valiantly and patiently waiting through the long years for Judgment Day, should, when it comes at last, and the heavens do veritably begin to unfold like a a scroll, throw away their instruments and flee in terror."

So we ask, What did President Hopkins mean when he spoke about Christianizing Dartmouth students? Presumably a little more than teaching them not to cheat at cards. One supposes that he had in mind the strength that especially attaches to idealism grounded in religious belief. The crime rate in Israel is lower among observant Jews than non-observant Jews. As a practical matter, what might the next president of Dartmouth do, if persuaded to revive Dartmouth's mandate? What has the retiring president done? The only time I have ever spent in the company of President Freedman was at a celebration of the 150th

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anniversary of Temple Emanu-El in New York City. We were two of six speakers, no one of whom, if memory serves, spoke words disruptive of the evening's decorum. What are we afraid of? The coexistence of Judaism and Christianity is not imperiled in the United States. Why should we assume that a self-confident Jewish university president would be affronted by the recitation of a Christian prayer or the singing of a Christian hymn in his presence? We recall Yogi Berra's comment when told that a Jew had been elected mayor of Dublin: "Only in America," he exulted. Is it reasonable, in a country in which all parties are unambiguously united in the resolve to guarantee religious freedom, to affirm the freedom of religion by inhibiting its exercise? Should we, out of an unrealistic fear of giving offense, deprive ourselves of satisfactions to which the majority of a college community are entitled? Those deferences one rightly expects to enjoy when living in a society whose profile Irving Kristol accurately describes. Might a college president, in such circumstances, search out two or three learned scholars intending to situate them to teach pivotal courses in philosophy and history? Might not classes be suspended on Good Friday, and religious exhortations cited at convocations? Why sap the joy of a religious tradition, which is what we seem to be doing by pledging, on Christmas Day, not to let the image of the Christ-child pass through the mind or, on Easter, to shut off any inclination to dwell on the Resurrection?

BUT all of the foregoing is, in a sense, rhetorically detached, even desiccated, the talk of religion and academic freedom and institutional histories and wayward paradigms. I want to leave my hosts, the Protestant and Jewish ministries, with some sense of my shared partisanship with one understanding they absolutely have in common, those of you who . . . believe. I close then with the final paragraph from Paul Elmer More's essay on Thomas Huxley. It caught my eye forty years ago, and I take from it now the undergirding confidence I share with your ministries. More wrote about the clash of the Darwinian model with the religious traditions of Oxford:

> In 1864, there was a Diocesan Conference at Oxford. There chanced at this time to be in the neighborhood a man who was neither priest nor scientist, a man given to absurd freaks of intellectual charlatanry, yet showing at times also such marvelous and sudden penetration into the heart of things as comes only to genius. It was Disraeli. "He lounged into the assembly," so the scene is described by Froude, "in a black velvet shooting-coat and a wide-awake hat, as if he had been accidentally passing through the town. He began in his usual affected manner, slowly and rather pompously, as if he had nothing to say beyond perfunctory platitudes." And then, turning to the presiding officer, the same Bishop Wilberforce whom four years earlier Huxley had so crushingly rebuked, he uttered one of his enigmatic and unforgettable epigrams: "What is the question now placed before society with a glibness the most astounding? The question is this: Is man an ape or an angel? I, my Lord, am on the side of the angels." The audience, not kindly disposed to the speaker, applauded the words as a jest; they were carried the next day over the whole land by the newspapers; they have often been repeated as an example of Disraeli's brilliant but empty wit. I suspect [Professor More concluded] that beneath their surface glitter, and hidden within their metaphor, pointed to suit an Oriental taste, these words contain a truth that shall some day break to pieces the new philosophy which Huxley spent his life so devotedly to establish. □

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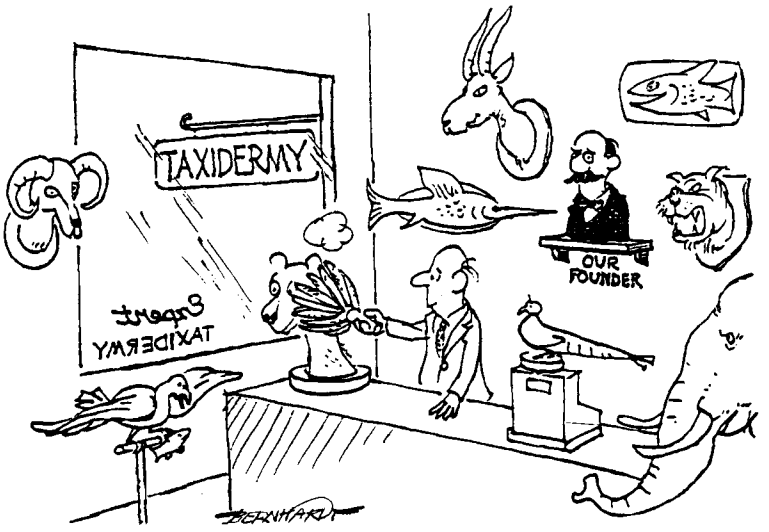


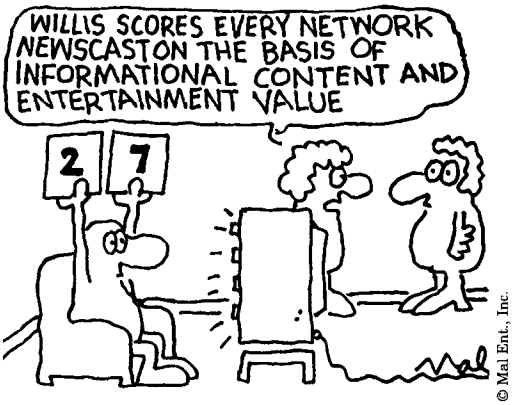
The Spirit of '98

Mrs. Clinton beats the drum;
Hubby holds the flag.
Al, who's lousy on the fife,
Tends to be a drag.
"Blue Suede Shoes" is all they play.
Lob a cream pie. Make my day.

—W. H. von Dreele

"Now that I have cured your fear of heights, Mr. Drew, what are your plans?"

"Maybe we should try marketing them as merely assertive?"



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ROGERS
©1998 PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE
BUDDY, IS IT TRUE YOU GOT FRISKY WITH THE PRESIDENT'S LEG IN THE OVAL OFFICE AND HE ASKED YOU TO LIE ABOUT IT?
KENNETH STARR

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

March 1, 1998

Dear Rusty,

Hi! We haven't actually met, but I already feel like I know you! Perhaps that's because I've been reading the Vice President's letters to you for a few years now—have you ever noticed that the envelopes have been kind of wrinkly around the seal?—and I think of you as a friend.

Listen, Rusty, I don't know whether or not you've caught my work (I've been working for the Administration for several years now, first at The New Yorker and now in the White House proper), but I'd be very grateful if you could do me a big favor.

When I say do "me" a favor, I think you're smart enough to know who I mean by "me." I mean "we," as in, do "us" a favor. And by "us," I think you know I mean me and the First Lady of the United States of America, simply the most dynamic woman who has ever been written about by me.

Here's the favor: Could you, when you respond to the attached letter from the Vice President, please tell him that you think I'm a pretty terrific guy, and a very solid strategist, and that you think he's being unnecessarily paranoid when he wonders if I'm reading his mail?

Thanks! You're a great American! (And I mean that in the non-ironic sense, okay?)

—Sidney Blumenthal

Dear Rusty,

Boy, what a weird couple of weeks!

The good news is that the Monica Lewinsky thing has totally blown over, which has pretty much freed our Administration up to not have to deal with the Iraq situation, which helps. Not having to deal with Iraq frees us up to not deal with the budget, which in turn gives us more time to go to fundraisers.

The bad news is that some pretty weird characters have emerged. I read in the Post yesterday that Bill's lawyer has hired some private investigators to look into the private lives of Ken Starr's staff. You know me, Rusty—I'm not interested in the least in people's private lives, including my own—and I think this tactic is bound to backfire.

I said as much in our War Room '98 meeting last night. The WR '98 is one of Sid Blumenthal's innovations, and the only reason I signed up was because I thought we'd be talking about Iraq. But it turns out that Sid has a broader definition of "war." I voiced my concerns about the private investigators at the beginning of the meeting. Sid peered at me suspiciously.

"I know Starr," Sidney said. "I've been mano a mano with him in front of the grand jury. I've seen what he's capable of. And he is, make no mistake, a demon from hell."

"A demon from hell?" I asked.

"Yes, sir."

"You mean metaphorically, right? You don't mean he's actually a demon with, you know . . ."

"Horns and a tail?"

I chuckled. "Yeah," I said.

"Could be."

"C'mon, Sidney," I said.

"Okay, okay. But the point is, we're fighting a war here. Against the right-wing zealots, the media, and anyone else trying to destroy our agenda."

"What's our agenda, again, Sid? I've been busy with the Kyoto thing and fundraising, so I'm a little behind."

"Well . . ." His voice trailed off. "Ummmm . . . give me a sec here."

He was silent for a moment.

"Balance the budget," I prompted.

"Yeah, that's one," he said. "And school uniforms. And . . . other stuff like that."

"And that's what they're against?" I asked.

"I think so," Sid said, sounding confused.

I put my hand on his shoulder. "Sid, I think you need to simmer down a little. You're getting a little high strung. When you've been here a little bit longer, it'll be easier for you to see that stuff like this happens a lot around here. It happens for a few weeks, then it tapers off, then it happens again. All of this stuff—Monica Lewinsky, Ken Starr, the whole thing—will just fade away in a few weeks. You just have to keep your eye on the big picture: logging rights, hurricanes, and electric cars."

He snorted derisively. "Is that what you write about to your friend Rusty?" he asked.

I didn't know what to say. I left the meeting in a pretty angry mood. Do you think Sid is reading my mail?

Your pal,

Al

Dear Rusty,

Well, that was the letter. Remember that favor you're going to do for me, okay? It's really important. Bill and Hillary (and Al) have important work to do, and we can't be distracted by petty scandals. After all, even if the stories are true, Monica Lewinsky hasn't done anything that I haven't done. At least, metaphorically speaking.

Thanks,

—Sid

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Got a Light?

MARK CUNNINGHAM

IN my 16 years as a regular smoker, I've quit twice. It's a filthy habit that takes years off your life (three to seven, on average) and degrades your health in the meantime. And I've gone back twice, because nicotine is a wonderful drug, and cigarettes perhaps the best drug-delivery device known to man.

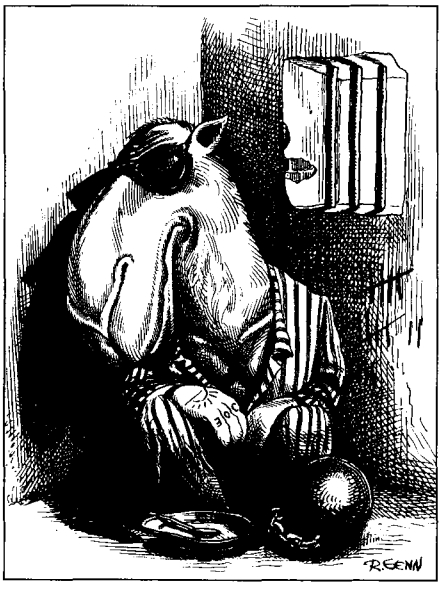
I savor the bitter taste and dusty feel of the smoke as it enters first my mouth and then my lungs; my spirits rise even with the tiny buzz the habit now provides. It picks me up when I'm feeling down, and adds to the joy of fine food, good drink, heartfelt conversation—of almost everything the good Lord put on this earth for our delight. It helps me think.

Consider: nicotine is a mood stabilizer that also enhances short-term concentration. Alternately a stimulant and a depressant (and, miraculously, almost always the one you need), it never has so strong an effect as to be disruptive. Meanwhile, the device—fire on a stick that you can hold between two fingers, with smoke you can expressively exhale—has a host of subsidiary uses: the perfect gesturing prop, nervous-fiddling toy, meditation focus, and more.

For Your Own Good: The Anti-Smoking Crusade and the Tyranny of Public Health, by Jacob Sullum (Free Press, 338 pp., $25)

Smoking doesn't suit everyone. Some people want to live eight or nine decades; they actually believe, I guess, in "the golden years." Others are keen to run marathons, or value their sense of smell, or dread lung cancer. I don't insist they share my habit, and will happily refrain or move at the first complaint. Can't they in turn leave me alone?

In the work at hand, Jacob Sullum examines the reasons now given for interfering in my pleasure. Sullum does not himself smoke; indeed, second-hand smoke bothers him more than it does most people. Rather, his motive is a rationalist's pique at the truly irrational—those who think themselves fit to make decisions for everyone else, who refuse to grant the possibility that reasonable people can freely choose to stick with a deadly habit. And *For Your Own Good* makes a compelling case that non-smokers also ought to be concerned about the principles promoted by the anti-smoking crusaders.



Joe Camel by Roman Genn

To start with, Sullum points out that, although science has deepened our knowledge of the vice's ill effects, it has not opened fundamentally new ground: people have always known what every child now knows: "It's bad for you." James I published "A Counterblaste to Tobacco" in 1604, shortly after taking the throne of England. Cotton Mather denounced the habit, too. The individual counts of the indictment—complaints about second-hand smoke, warnings of the addiction's irresistible power, etc.—have equally lengthy pedigrees. Fond nicknames like "coffin nails" and "little white-slavers" predated the 1964 Surgeon General's Report by half a century.

Of course that report made a difference: U.S. smoking rates have been dropping ever since. (Indeed, they had begun falling before then, thanks to the publicity given the studies on which the report was based. Other factors may have played a role—smoking rates jump in wartime, when life is cheaper and pleasure more dear; a postwar drop could thus have been expected.) As a result, America today holds more ex-smokers than smokers.

That simple fact pretty much destroys one of the core premises of the anti-smoking fanatics—the idea that the state must save us helpless addicts from an evil outside force. Another claim, that the government must prevent the tobacco companies from deceiving us, is falsified by another truth: No one believes them, in the face of the ample information available on the risks of smoking. (Indeed, surveys by Harvard economist W. Kip Viscusi show that even smokers *overestimate* the habit's health risks.)

What about second-hand smoke? The research to date indicates that it presents at most minuscule risk, and only to those who live with smokers for decades. The Environmental Protection Agency report that found otherwise was the result of blatant, essentially political, violations of standard scientific procedure. Similarly, the then commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, Dr. David Kessler, had to twist logic and the plain language of the law in order to make his own pronouncements on his "obligation" to classify cigarettes a "drug-delivery device" and therefore to issue FDA regulations concerning them.

These crusaders may privately ration-

Mr. Cunningham is associate editorial-page editor at the New York Post.

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alize their dishonesty as fighting fire with fire—countering the tobacco industry's lies and hardball legal tactics. But the corruption runs deeper.

Take the tactic that actually brought Big Tobacco to its knees (or at least to the bargaining table that produced the famous "settlement"): state attorneys general suing cigarette makers to recover the "extra" funds the states "had" to spend on Medicaid care for smokers. This conveniently ignores the primary moral liabilities—of those who choose to smoke, knowing the risks as well as or better than they do the risks of any other activity we undertake, and of the states, for choosing to subsidize individuals' health-care costs. Beware, ye other merchants of premature, politically incorrect death—ye distillers, fatty-food distributors, gun-makers, auto-makers.

As it happens, the tobacco settlement will simply push up prices, which future smokers will pay—a fact the politically ambitious attorneys general will happily ignore, while harping on the riches they brought to the public fisc.

It's not just the politicians whose motives merit suspicion. Public health (the avowed cause of crusaders like Kessler, Ralph Nader, C. Everett Koop, and the rest of this movement) once meant building decent sewers and ensuring pure drinking water. It was a genuine effort to serve the common good. Its practitioners chose not to rest on their laurels, but to shift to a war on a purely private vice—a war they wage with a sanctimonious arrogance which leads them to disregard the happiness of those they claim to help.

I've quit smoking twice, but have come back to it twice because nicotine is a wonderful drug.

Exaggeration? No. A shrink acquaintance of mine reports with disgust that, in Manhattan at least, smoking is now banned in psychiatric wards: the authorities insist on adding the stress of quitting to the misery of the mentally ill at a time when they need all their will power for far tougher fights. There is no kindness, but only cruelty, in that. □

Get Happy

WENDY SHALIT

MY good-natured cousin Emily skeptically eyed the book I had brought to our coffee date. "*Happiness Is a Serious Problem*? Hmmm," she mused, then cheerfully volunteered, "I think happiness is a serious problem only for people who are unhappy." We both laughed, but I knew I would not be able to dismiss Emily's observation. She is one of the loveliest people I know, happens to be married to a very kind man, and on top of it recently gave birth to an adorable little boy. If anyone is an expert on happiness, it's Emily.

Happiness Is a Serious Problem: A Human Nature Repair Manual, by Dennis Prager (HarperCollins, 179 pp., $23)

Nonetheless, it is Dennis Prager's task to prove Emily wrong. Happiness, he insists in his new book, must be taken seriously by everyone. Becoming as happy as we can be is not just something we owe ourselves; instead, as we learn right in Chapter One: "Happiness Is a Moral Obligation." Mr. Prager, a conservative radio host and public speaker, first suspected that happiness was fundamentally altruistic when a woman approached him after one of his lectures. She simply sighed, "I only wish my husband had come to this talk!" Anyone who has run out of ways to cheer up a depressed spouse or inconsolable friend instinctively knows the truth of Prager's insight that "we owe it to our husband or wife, our fellow workers, our children, our friends, indeed to everyone who comes into our lives, to be as happy as we can be." Since this is tricky sometimes, a few pointers are in order.

To Dennis Prager, happiness is a kind of craft, or what in philosophy class is called a *techne*. If you practice it, you can master it.

First, working at happiness entails "developing attitudes that enable us not to despair." One of these attitudes we are to develop is that life is tragic. Prager points out that if we assume that tragedy is normal, then instead of "waiting for something wonderful to happen" to make us happy, we will be happy by default. Next, we must recognize that our nature is insatiable and we will invariably be dissatisfied. To control this insatiable nature, we should distinguish between "necessary dissatisfaction" about things that we can change, and "unnecessary dissatisfaction" about things we cannot change.

It also helps considerably if you lower your expectations to meet reality. One of Prager's examples is a man waiting for "a Playboy Playmate who studies Torah." This is unrealistic. He reminds us that, "in general, *expectations lead to unhappiness*." So does hoping for unconditional love: "Seeking unconditional love is a vestige of childhood." Prager even equips us with a formula, "U = I – R," which he calls "The Unhappiness Formula: the amount of Unhappiness equals Images minus Reality."

Other recommendations: Don't equate happiness with success or mere fun ("Everything that leads to happiness involves pain"), and don't compare yourself with others. The chapter titled "The Opposite Sex" is the most insightful in the book, underscoring the differences between male and female insatiability: "among men, this area of insatiability is sexual variety; and among women, it is emotional intimacy." Becoming aware of our differences helps us control these areas of insatiability. In the case of the man who acts on his insatiable sexual nature, for example, after sleeping with a new woman he finds that he is "right back where he was the day before he had his affair"—still "lusting for someone new"—only now with "potentially disastrous marital and other problems." But if he realizes he can never be satisfied, perhaps he won't make the attempt. A woman, for her part, "must continually grapple with the fact that she can never fully satisfy her emotional nature. For a woman to know this about her nature can be very liberating. By knowing about her insatiable nature, she can come to appreciate (when possible) the intimacy that she does have."

Miss Shalit is a contributing editor of City Journal.

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It's true. I shut my copy of *Happiness Is a Serious Problem*, began reciting, "My emotional nature is insatiable," and suddenly a deep feeling of calm washed over me. Unfortunately, this feeling departed shortly thereafter. Luckily, there are other tips.

Prager turns out to be an unreserved enthusiast for curing the "biochemical origins of unhappiness" through psychopharmaceutical drugs. Taking Prozac does not mean one is avoiding "the real sources of pain" in life, he explains, nor do psychopharmaceutical drugs "*make* anyone happy; they only *enable* people to become happy."

To Dennis Prager, happiness is a craft, a techne. *If you practice it, you can master it.*

Fair enough, but those who do not want to go on Prozac will probably find Prager's philosophical advice more helpful than these pharmaceutical remedies. "Happiness is only achievable," he later posits, "when it is a by-product of something else, and you must hold that something to be more important than happiness." Prager suggests that the pursuit of moderation, depth, wisdom, clarity, goodness, and the transcendent will help us attain happiness.

Clearly, Dennis Prager has a talent for getting right to the point, without any footnotes or explanation. In a recent issue of his newsletter, *Prager Perspective*, for example, he answered that question which had puzzled so many pundits: "Princess Diana: Why So Much Grief?" The greater outpouring of grief for Diana than for Mother Teresa was not, according to Prager, "an example of a world gone wrong"; it was perfectly understandable. After all, "Diana was young"; "Diana was the mother of two young children"; "Fairy Tales should not have unhappy endings"; "She was a good soul"; "She was an accessible, and troubled, princess"; "We care about those we know about."

A few weeks later, this time on his radio show, Prager memorably reproached men who don't open doors for women. Several men called in, each complaining that, once upon a time, a woman didn't thank him for opening a door, and so now he won't do it ever again. Prager was disgusted with these men and notified them that you don't open a door for the thank you, but because you are a man: "Men, you should be ashamed of yourselves! What kinda nonsense is this? Of *course* you hold a door for a woman!" This remarkable gift Prager has, to state the obvious trenchantly with no fuss at all, is very well suited to his radio show and newsletter. It is somewhat less well suited to a book, particularly one that takes up an idea with such a long history.

After all, Prager's emphasis on moderation and his thesis that "happiness is only achievable when it is a by-product of something else, and you must hold that something to be more important than happiness," are very Aristotelian. (Aristotle, of course, famously drew the distinction between "ends" and "final ends.") Aristotle also held that happiness was not pleasure; it was, rather, the "virtuous activity of the soul." As for Prager's "Unhappiness equals Images minus Reality" formula, his acceptance of fate, and his recommendation that we scale back our expectations, that is all very Stoic. Except that in postmodern Stoicism, should we fail to reduce our expectations sufficiently, there are always psychopharmaceutical drugs at the ready to take care of any remaining "biochemical origins of unhappiness." Yet to conclude that Prager is just Chrysippus on Prozac would be unfair, I think. By the time we jump to his next formula for happiness—that men and women are more contented when cognizant of their different natures—we seem to be bouncing much closer to Rousseau's *Emile*.

The difficulty here is not just one of attribution. Intelligent people are continually reinventing the wheel, and in an age scornful of dead white males it is wonderful to hear a living white male making these old arguments. Rather, the problem with stuffing so many philosophies into one book is that half of the resulting advice is simply incompatible with the other half. An itch to lead a life of Aristotelian virtue, for example, is not likely to issue from a pose of Stoic resignation.

In the end, Dennis Prager's suggestions run in different directions because he hasn't really decided which is the best path to happiness. But then again, who has? At least he warned us: happiness *is* a serious problem. □

Conversations with Himself

J. BUDZISZEWSKI

"THIS book is an actual dialogue with God," reports New Age author Neale Donald Walsch. It is "God's latest word on things." And how Mr. Walsch loves his Lord! "I love you," he says to God; "you know that?"

"I know you do," replies God, "and I love you." Sweet—until one realizes that Mr. Walsch is writing mash notes to himself. He thinks God and Neale Donald Walsch are the same thing. Theoretical pantheism is practical metheism; that's why *Conversations with God: Book 1* has been on the *New York Times* best-seller list for more than a year, put there by my generation and the generation we raised. Read it as a mirror of the age.

Is the book difficult? No, it is all very "logical," as the conversations of people in an asylum often are. Here is how the argument works: 1) God is the greatest entity imaginable. 2) So God is All Things. 3) Naturally, All Things has no consciousness of its own. 4) So God can experience itself as God only through parts of itself that do have consciousness. 5) That's you and me. 6) But All Things is all there is. 7) So there's really only one thing. 8) So we drop the distinction between the All and its parts. 9) So we're not just parts of God—we're God. 10) But there is only one of us. 11) So God is Me.

Granted the author's definitions, his

Conversations with God: Book 1, by Neale Donald Walsch (Putnam, 211 pp., $19.95)

Conversations with God: Book 2, by Neale Donald Walsch (Hampton Roads Publishing, 263 pp., $19.95)

Mr. Budziszewski is an associate professor in the departments of government and philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin.

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book really is a dialogue with God. Just as, granted the President's definitions, he really hasn't had a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

Best of all, the argument is irrefutable, because All Things isn't just All There Is but also All There Isn't. Contradiction is okay. "And you must understand the greatest truth," says God: "Nothing Matters." Except for keeping this profitable racket going as long as possible.

"I believe the material speaks for itself," God says, so let us hear what He has to say.

Finding Truth. "If you want to know what's true for you about something, look to how you're *feeling* about it."

Best-selling New Age author Neale Donald Walsch thinks that God and Neale Donald Walsch are the same thing.

Avoiding Error. "Some feelings are counterfeit feelings. . . . Thoughts *masquerading* as feelings."

God's Knowledge. "I have been speculating about myself a long time."

What God Doesn't Want. "I do not want your worship. I do not need your obedience and it is not necessary for you to serve Me."

What God Does Want. "Passion is God wanting to say 'hi.'"

Beatitude. "Blessed are the Self-centered, for they shall know God."

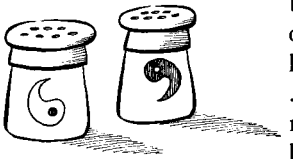
Good Relationships. "Let each person in relationship worry not about the other, but only, only, only about Self."

The Meaning of Love. "For centuries you have been taught that love-sponsored action arises out of the choice to be, do, and have whatever produces the highest good for another. Yet I tell you this: the highest good is that which produces the highest good for *you*. . . . This is because you and the other are one."

Obligations to Others. "The answer is: you have *no* obligation. Neither in relationship, nor in all of life. . . . Nor any restriction or limitation, nor any guidelines or rules. Nor are you bound by any circumstances or situations, nor constrained for any offense, nor *capable* of any—for there is no such thing as 'offensive' in the eyes of God."

Adultery. "Nor shall you covet your neighbor's spouse, for why would you want your *neighbor's* spouse when you know *all* others are your spouse?"

Before Dropping Off the Key. "Give yourself abundant pleasure, and you will have abundant pleasure to give to others. The masters of Tantric sex know this. That's why they encourage masturbation. . . . Tantric lovers, therefore, often self-pleasure before they pleasure each other."



While Dropping Off the Key. "Remember, your job on the planet is not to see how long you can stay in a relationship, it's to decide, and experience, Who You Really Are."

After Dropping Off the Key. "So be ready, kind soul. For you will be vilified and spat upon . . . from the moment you accept and adopt your holy cause—the realization of Self."

Self-Improvement, Lesson One. "Practice saying ten times each day: I LOVE SEX. Practice saying *this* ten times: I LOVE MONEY. Now, you want a really tough one? Try saying *this* ten times: I LOVE *ME*!"

Self-Improvement, Lesson Two. "When you have been a man long enough . . . then you may become a woman."

Right and Wrong. "I have never set down a 'right' or a 'wrong,' a 'do' or a 'don't.' . . . To say that something . . . is 'wrong' would be as much as to tell you not to do it. To tell you not to do it would be to prohibit you. To prohibit you would be to restrict you. To restrict you would be to deny the reality of Who You Really Are, as well as the opportunity for you to create and experience that truth."

Hitler. "Hitler did nothing 'wrong.' Hitler simply did what he did."

His Service to the Jews. "Now your thought that Hitler was a monster is based on the fact that he ordered the killing of millions of people, correct? . . . Those souls were released from their earthly bondage, like butterflies emerging from a cocoon."

His Eternal Reward. "Hitler went to Heaven. When you understand this, you will understand God."

Assurance of Salvation. "I mean you can't lose in this game. You can't go wrong. It's not part of the plan. There's no way not to get where you're going. There's no way to miss your destination. If God is your target, you're in luck, because *God is so big, you can't miss*."

Whether Anything Has Meaning. "It doesn't."

Achieving Self-Knowledge. "You must call upon yourself the darkness."

Celebration. "Remember this: True celebration is mindless."

How can one do justice to such a book? It covers so much more that I have not mentioned, like the true reason for suffering and poverty (people choose to be born sick and poor), how to achieve world peace (it's a "personal thing"), and why we can have whatever we truly want (the universe is "just a big Xerox machine" for our thoughts).

One can hardly imagine a more mindless tome—excuse me, a more *true celebration*—than these volumes. □

Deco Chamber

JAMES GARDNER

DAVID Gelernter cares more passionately about everything than most of us do about anything. Such is the catholicity of his concerns that nothing escapes for long the bear-hug of his conviction, not even things that the rest of us accept with relative passivity. You know he means it when he asserts that "today's TV comedy [is] less funny than Sid Caesar's in the 1950s," that Frank Lloyd Wright was "the greatest architect of the century," and that "Liquor brings out the worst in us. TV does too, and so do computers."

In similar terms Mr. Gelernter, a cultural critic and professor of computer science at Yale, takes on the cybernetic revolution in *Machine Beauty*. Indeed, his latest book is nothing less than a lively attempt to expose the soft and subjective underbelly of scientific advance. Most technocrats believe that progress consists in the disinterested

Mr. Gardner is NR*'s art critic.*

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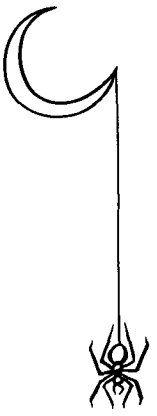
discovery and application of scientific laws. Mr. Gelernter, by contrast, cares about "machine beauty," that is, the physical and technological elegance of the machine itself. This essentially personal and emotional preoccupation is, he believes, "the driving force behind technology and science." At the same time, "machine beauty bothers us. We act as a society as if our goal were not to nurture or celebrate it but to stamp it out." As a result, "We guide our technology enterprises badly." In considering this idea of machine beauty, Mr. Gelernter has included informative chapters on the development of the desktop computer, on software (which he sees as a virtual machine), and on what the future holds for the desktop. And yet even when his writing becomes a little technical, Mr. Gelernter is ever and always composing an essay on the aesthetics of taste.



Now, there is a peculiar conservatism to Mr. Gelernter's taste, an implicit antagonism to the computer culture of which he is so much a part. He reveals a general distrust of postmodernism in culture and postindustrialism in technology. He considers computers to be "graceless, lumpy objects." By temperament he is a nostalgist. It is significant that his longest work to date concerns the 1939 World's Fair, whose industrial-age, art-deco view of the future he prefers to the future we got and to the future we now foresee. Lovingly invoking the Emerson radio of 1938 which sits, no longer usable, in his living room, Gelernter praises both its "extraordinary aesthetic achievement" and the "brilliant culture [i.e., America in the Thirties] that created this thing." As for automobiles, "The Hispano-Suiza cars of the 1920s and 1930s were automotive deep beauty masterpieces."

At one level, I simply don't share Mr. Gelernter's taste. And about taste, as always, there is no dispute. But the reason I don't touches upon a difficulty I have with certain parts of his argument. "The beauty of a proof or a machine lies in the happy marriage of simplicity and power," he says, quoting with approval the words of William Strunk that "a sentence should contain no unnecessary words and a machine no unnecessary parts." Now, even if one endorses this pared-down aesthetic, what strikes me about the art deco that Mr. Gelernter loves is that it offends against this credo in two ways. First, it is defined by its use of ornament, which, precisely because it is ornament, is in a sense "unnecessary." Second, and unlike most other ornamentations, those of art deco presume upon the status of function. Unless, that is, you are prepared to argue that such things as fins on the back of a Pontiac—a car designed in the deco spirit—made it move any faster.

How can this contradiction be resolved? Quite easily, in turns out. Mr. Gelernter can love the economy of machines and the superfluity of art deco because, when he speaks of "machine beauty," he is really applying the same label to two disparate things: first, the intellectual satisfaction of solving a technological or philosophical problem; second, the purely personal pleasure one takes in a certain style once associated with machines, namely art deco. But is the beauty of machines really the same thing as the beauty of art, the contention at the core of Mr. Gelernter's argument? Obviously, cars and computer monitors are designed in obedience to aesthetic principles parallel to those of architecture or painting. People have to like the way a thing looks if it is to leave the warehouse. But no matter how beautiful a car might be, if it can't move, we have no use for it. However elegant a mathematical formula might be, if it is simply wrong, it makes no claim upon our respect. But we require nothing of the sort from a painting or a poem. The beauty of a machine, then, is an intellectual beauty, a cognitive understanding of the economic distribu-

David Gelernter cares more passionately about everything than most of us do about anything.

Machine Beauty: Elegance and the Heart of Technology, by David Gelernter (Basic Books, 166 pp., $20)

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tion of energy, rather than an aesthetic, that is, perceptual, appreciation of form.

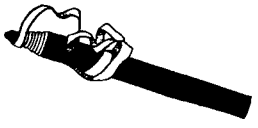
I should also say that I do not share Mr. Gelernter's conviction that computers are ugly, a point which he makes at some length in the penultimate chapter of *Machine Beauty*. The screen on which I am composing this review is, to my taste, lovely and luminous and wholly conducive to creativity. The machine itself, an elegant black monitor seated upon a PC throne, is an adornment to my workspace. Now the relevance of this observation to Mr. Gelernter's book is as follows: postindustrial technology adorns itself with postmodern design—which has been perhaps the most successful application of postmodern aesthetics to date, far more successful than in painting, sculpture, or any of the other fine arts. It has rediscovered the purity of design that was the best thing about High Modernism, as opposed to the "mod" exorbitancies of the Sixties and Seventies. And yet, through an increased sensitivity to qualities such as light and touch, it avoids the surly aloofness of High Modernism, the concern with form alone. It is humbler than the designs of the past, less insistent upon purity and proving a point, and more content simply to make human life a little easier. As such it is a notable instance of that union of aesthetics and machinery that Mr. Gelernter argues for in this book. □

TRAVEL

Ghost Town

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

YOU wouldn't have wanted to live there, but the Evil Empire was fun to visit. Every empty shop was an ideological vindication, each dismal meal the basis for a grimly amusing anecdote. The tourist could play Dissident (Visit an oppressed church!) or Spy (Lurk outside the Lubyanka in a raincoat!). And what about that air of menace? You could be tailed by the police, harassed by goons, or even, if you were very, very lucky, get caught in a KGB sex trap. Everything was forbidden, and thus enticing. Pointlessly, but excitingly, train stations could not be photographed. Nor could bridges. Take that, Mr. Reagan! And as for bringing in *samizdat*? Try explaining freedom of the press to the suitably surly ("You want to make trouble in our country?") border guards as they confiscate *The Hunt for Red October*. These were people who wanted to bury us. And they were not going to apologize.



And they still aren't. Which is why, even now, Moscow remains the place to go for a sinister, Stalinist thrill. To be sure, there have been changes, but many of the old Soviet ways persist. That Russian talent for the gothic and the just plain weird has also survived. And so will most visitors.

Even if, as true nostalgics should, they check into the Hotel Ukraina. Not the usual Intourist concrete block, the Ukraina is one of the six Stalinist wedding-cake skyscrapers that still dominate the Moscow skyline. It is a grimly lit and exuberantly totalitarian hulk, festooned with crumbling concrete stars, hammers, and sickles. Other Cold-War relics can be found inside, including seedily threatening security men, a jolly mural of Soviet Ukraine, and, incredibly, a group of earnest Americans over to talk "people to people" about peace. In a few years, the Ukraina will be a place of luxury and pseudo-sophistication filled with New Russians and old investment bankers. But that moment has not yet arrived. Like Russia itself, this hotel is in transition, and the journey can be a little rough. Which is why it is better to dine elsewhere.

Just down the road, in fact, by the cheerfully unrenamed Barrikadnaya (Barricades) Metro station. Le Gastronom is one of the best restaurants in Moscow. Located at the bottom of another Stalinist tower, it promises yet more dictatorship chic. Vast, dominated by overlarge chandeliers, over-officious security men, and clumsy marble pillars, it is a Cecil B. De Mille, nose-pressed-to-the-window idea of how the rich should live, something all too suitable for the Stalinist bureaucracy and the morbid tourist. It's bogus, unfortunately. Gastronom was a food store, not a restaurant. Stalin never ate there.

Nor did he dance his cares away at the nightclub called Titanic. In his day, the evening was for arrests, not discos. Now there is a nighttime scene as shifting and evanescent as anything found in Manhattan. If a bit rougher. That explains the airport-style weapon detectors at the entrance to many of the better spots. In New York they may be the sign of a bad high school. In Moscow they herald a great night out.

And having them may be prudent. At Titanic, notes one English-language paper, "you won't get laid, but you might get shot." But then this is typical of an expatriate press only too pleased to wear its "aren't we tough to be in Moscow" credentials on its sleeve. Amid the stock prices and the guides to eating out, the pages are filled with entertaining summaries of recent scandals, crises, and crimes. Cannibalism seems unusually popular at the moment. Perhaps the restaurants are to blame.

Cannibalism seems unusually popular in Russia at the moment. Perhaps the restaurants are to blame.

The determined tourist can also visit the sites of earlier, more traditionally Soviet atrocities. NKVD boss Lavrenti Beria's Moscow mansion, for example, still stands. These days it's the Tunisian Embassy. Tunisian diplomatic intrigues take place over the network of cells in which Beria's victims were tortured, raped, and murdered. For the Tunisians have left the basement much as they found it. The cells are dank and sinister, accessible by dark stairs and gloomy passages. "I don't believe in ghosts," explained one diplomat.

That's strange, as Moscow is a city where the dead don't always know their place. Hitler's jaw is on a shelf in the archives of the Russian Counter-Intelligence Service and, some say, can be

Mr. Stuttaford is a writer in New York.

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viewed for a fee. Meanwhile, at Moscow's Brain Institute they have Lenin's brain, sliced into 31,000 pieces and carefully preserved on microscope slides. Famously, the rest of the old Bolshevik's remains remain in their mausoleum above ground, as embalmed as the attitudes of his supporters. In the Duma they continue to talk of the proletariat, imperialism, and the Glorious October Revolution. Outside, where the Lenin Museum used to be, unpleasant old people still gather, Stalin banners in their hands, anti-Semitic pamphlets in their pockets. A tape of some of Stalin's better speeches can be bought for $1.

An even less reliable record of the past is available down the road, at the Lubyanka. K, G, and B have been replaced by more tactful initials, but the old yellow building still holds secret policemen and a small museum that details some of their achievements. With a few gaps.

Elsewhere, Moscow could do with a few more gaps, particularly where statues are concerned. For all the changes, the hugely increased freedom, and the chance of a greater prosperity, this is still too much the city of the Soviets. Its buildings, its monuments, its manners and morality still deliver that old malevolent charge. Looking at the St. Petersburg of the 1830s, the waspishly reactionary Marquis de Custine snidely noted that it was "barbarism plastered over." Well, at least someone had tried.

It would be more difficult to say the same of the Moscow of the 1990s. Lenin still enjoys his public spaces. Lenin in iron, Lenin in concrete, Lenin as statue, bas-relief, or painting, thoughtful, brave, and wise. His victims? They get a bare rock taken from the site of the first Gulag. It sits across from the Lubyanka, just a few minutes' walk from a monumental statue of Karl Marx.

That comes as no surprise. To be fair, some streets have been renamed, and a Bolshevik statue or two taken down, but for the most part the relics of the *ancien régime* survive alongside, or under, the shiny construction of the new era.

And so Stalin's Metro, the showpiece that actually worked, continues to function. Its escalators still thunder at alarming speed down past marble torn from a cathedral. And the idols still stand in its halls: Red Army men, workers, and peasants reminding you that the State will prevail and that, yes, the train will arrive soon. And it just might. □

FILM

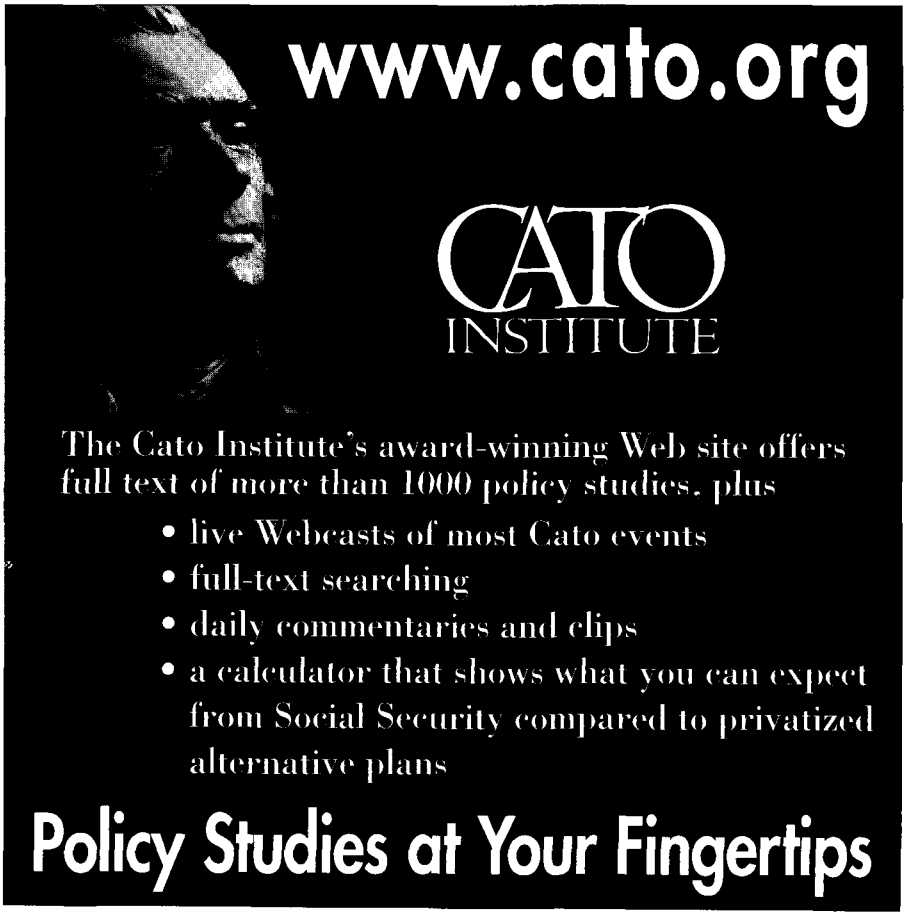
Unafraid of Virginia Woolf

JOHN SIMON

As with Henry James, I never felt comfortable with Virginia Woolf. Her fiction, that is; her nonfiction I have always found of considerable interest. Now comes the film version of ***Mrs. Dalloway***, and though the movie is perforce different from the wholly stream-of-consciousness novel, it presents separate but equal problems.

For starters, I have always mistrusted writings about men and women in love, sex, and marriage by authors lacking those experiences. (There are, to be sure, exceptions: Jane Austen and Tennessee Williams leap to mind.) But here we have Virginia Woolf in her long and totally asexual marriage to Leonard Woolf, whatever the exact nature of her lesbian mopings and gropings with Vita Sackville-West may have been. Something like this surfaces in the novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, where the young heroine chooses the safe Richard Dalloway over the passionate Peter Walsh, and has a quasi-sexual involvement with her best friend, Sally Seton.

But what may work in exquisitely invertebrate, unhingedly expansive prose, does not parse in the more concrete medium of film. Why does the young Clarissa of the recurrent flashbacks, who proudly proclaims the world-changing feats she aspires to both with Peter and with Sally, settle for the safe but pedestrian union with Richard Dalloway? She who, in the movie, is so full of energy, so bent on absorbing life through every pore? The film does not make clear the trajectory from the impassioned excitement of youthful life at the picturesque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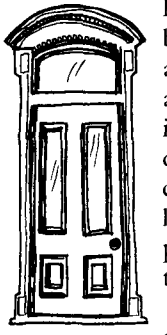
country house of Bourton to the successful but mundane compromise of Westminster, where life dwindles to mere social life.

To return to Woolf the novelist, however. Of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Mitchell A. Leaska writes, "Events are no longer given in the traditional manner of cause and effect. The focus now is on the internal atmosphere of her characters, whose lives are dramatized . . . through a series of interior monologues of their remembered past, and the novel moves forward through successive moments of condensed experience. . . . Here it is mental time, psychological time, that governs." All very well, though hardly Woolf's invention—the *monologue intérieur* dates back to Edouard Dujardin (1888) and, in English, to James Joyce. The big question is *whose* consciousness is streaming, and *how*. For the movements of the psyche need to be, however subtly and inconspicuously, controlled; Woolf oozes, bleeds, and dissolves all over the place, from incoherent simile to inaccessible metaphor.

Exquisitely invertebrate prose does not parse in the more concrete medium of film.

Take "overcome with his own grief, which rose like a moon looked at from a terrace, ghastly beautiful with light from a sunken day." Far-fetched in isolation, such tropes become intolerable in heaps: e.g., "Such are the visions which proffer great cornucopias full of fruit to the solitary traveler, or murmur in his ear like sirens lolloping away on the green sea waves, or are dashed in his face like bunches of roses, and rise to the surface like pale faces which fishermen flounder through floods to embrace." This hurtling from dubious to yet more dubious—and suffocating—image is utterly stifling, not helped by that unfortunate *flounder*, which, in this context, conjures up fish rather than fish-tailed maidens. In short—which Woolf seldom is—a riot of images spilling into one another in a fuzz of exquisiteness, frenzied sensitivity running smoothshod into deliquescence.

Bad as this strikes me in fiction, it is fatal for cinema. Although movies thrive on dissolves, the crossfades are from specifics to other specifics, not from fancies to further (or furthest) fancies. The screenwriter adapting Woolf must either plunge into excessive voiceover, or opt for harder edges and greater solidity than is consistent with the material, and thus betray the text. The latter is preferable, though, and is what Eileen Atkins proposes as scenarist, and Marleen Gorris delivers as director.



Miss Atkins, a great actress, qualifies for this job, too. Her stage adaptations—*A Room of One's Own* as a solo piece for herself, *Vita and Virginia* (the Sackville-West–Woolf affair) as a duet for Vanessa Redgrave and herself—were superb achievements, and there was also the five-part BBC radio series she made from the Woolf diaries. But as a movie *Mrs. Dalloway* is something else again. All those intersecting interior monologues, those shuttlings between past and present, those minuscule grains of happenstance accreting around them such enormous pearls of poetic verbiage—how is the screen to cope with such unleashed orgies of sensibility? Even in the expert hands of Eileen Atkins, whose name ironically echoes that of "a grim old housemaid" fleetingly mentioned in the novel: Ellen Atkins.

The main theme is, of course, the curious near-parallel between Clarissa Dalloway and her semi-demented alter ego, the shell-shocked war veteran Septimus Warren Smith. Both have a teamingly hyperactive life of the imagination, both rely heavily on support from their spouses, both are trying to escape from their dogging pasts (she from not marrying Peter Walsh, he from watching his beloved officer—or, in the film, fellow soldier—Evans being blown to bits in battle). But Clarissa, a model hostess who, during the one day covered, gives a glittering party, ultimately differs from Septimus, who, subjected to the callous ineptitude of a bullying physician and an arrogant psychiatrist, kills himself.

The novel manages to make these coprotagonists, who cross paths but never meet, interact through the author's speculations; the film cannot quite bring their convergences and divergences into full focus. The jettisoned lover, Peter Walsh—much remembered and now back after years in India, an unsuccessful marriage, and a new affair with a married woman—is less of a problem for the film than Evans, who, ghostlike, keeps hunting Septimus, and whom the screen must show in excessive concreteness.

Oddly, though, the movie's major weakness and major strength are both Vanessa Redgrave. She isn't the birdlike, delicate child-woman of the book, and, a strong presence and a very tall one, she towers over all around her, male or female, creating imbalance in height as well as depth. Her magnificent physical command and entrancingly opulent voice, however, are compellingly and exhilaratingly attention-grabbing.

Next, the film is understandably seduced into literalness. Right off the bat, we see Evans ignoring Septimus's warning and being torn to shreds by a grenade, as his comrade watches, devastated. This is both clichéd and topheavy, too realistic, as are also the subsequent apparitions of the dead Evans. Moreover, through no fault of Rupert Graves as Septimus, or Amelia Bullmore as his pathetic Italian wife, the Warren Smith story isn't accorded enough time and detail to unfurl in. And then there is the casting.

Young Clarissa is played by the winning Natascha McElhone as too extroverted and assertive, with not a chink in her armor. As young Sally, Lena Headey (the rare child star who grows up both talented and beautiful) is perfect. But as the middle-aged Sally, Sarah Badel is too gross and farcical. As the antithetical young swains, Alan Cox makes a tolerable though somewhat undashing Peter, and Robert Portal a nice but perhaps too handsome Richard. Middle-aged, though, the excellent John Standing's Richard has it all over the miscast and mousy Michael Kitchen's Peter, further dwarfed in stature by Miss Redgrave.

Supporting roles are well taken, with especially fine work from Margaret Tyzack as the awesome Lady Bruton, Robert Hardy as the sinister Dr. Bradshaw, Oliver Ford Davies as the pompous Hugh Whitbread, and, briefly, Phyllis Calvert, out of a long retirement, as Aunt Helena. There are equally enticing country and urban scenes shot by Sue Gibson, and splendid music by Ilona Sekacz. The filmed *Mrs. Dalloway* may be questionable Virginia Woolf, but it provides civilized entertainment amid today's meager movie fare. □

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LANGUAGE

Laurie's Portmanteau

D. KEITH MANO

"YOU just made that up out of blue air," my wife, Laurie Kennedy, said to me. Blue air, I thought, that's a gorgeous image. What my wife had done, she had taken "out of thin air" and overlapped it with "out of the blue" to make, well, something better. Quite unconsciously. When I brought this to her attention, she said, "Oh, you're so smart, you must figure you're the greatest thing since chopped bread."

Laurie, thank you so much, is not Mrs. Malaprop. Malapropisms occur when pretentious and stupid people affect a vocabulary that they haven't yet mastered. My wife, by contrast, is refurbishing the language day in and day out. When you hear Laurie say, "I worked like a troubadour," instead of "like a stevedore," you think, "Yes . . . I suppose writing and singing lyric poetry are hard jobs, never thought of it that way at all."

Nor is my wife just some commonplace Spooner. (You remember him, William Archibald Spooner, Anglican cleric and teacher, who said, "Let's have a cheer for the queer old dean," when Queen Victoria came to visit his college.) Compared with Laurie's subtle associative activity, Spoonerism is mere brain Nerf. In a Spoonerism the first letter (or syllable) of one word will be substituted for the first letter (or syllable) of another: "crushing blow" becomes a nonsensical "blushing crow." There is neither poetry nor improvement in it—"crow" can tell you nothing about "blow," or "dean" about "queen." But when Laurie says, "Don't get my gander up," you *see* her anger (her dander) strutting around like a truculent old bird.

"Portmanteau word" is the technical term for what my wife gerrymanders in her mind. ("Chortle" is a long-accepted portmanteau word—"chuckle" and "snort" blended together. So are "motel" and, more recently, "humongous.") Portmanteau words epitomize the inevitable movement toward more compressed and complex meaning that must occur in any healthy language. Laurie for instance has told me not to "incringe" on her space. This compound of "infringe" and "encroach" will become a useful intensifier once the world has been told about it. When in top form my wife can portmanteau whole phrases. So: "Get your goat" and "Bite the bait" turn into "Don't let them bite your goat."

Since I am a novelist and screenwriter, my associative mechanism is primarily visual: I note your pair of pliers on the green carpet and "see" some frog darting through pondwater scum. My wife—a Tony-nominated actress—has spent her life interpreting language. Her imaginative metabolism, therefore, is most often verbal. Talk about birth control and the law, and she will favor "tubal litigation." If you betray her, you "turn Redcoat." Insecure people have "kinks in their armor," and Jewish men are "circumscribed."

My wife once saw policemen putting 'cufflinks' on a mugger. (You now know why law enforcement has been so expensive.)

Since early childhood my wife's portmanteau has been full of nonce language like that. (A priest, she once said, put his "hassock on before celebrating Mass.") And thirty years' worth of theater has further shaped her cauliflower tongue. The rehearsal process, after all, is conducive to bizarre word affiliation. There are several categories of thinking involved. The conscious pattern (script) is dominant yet incomplete: cast members haven't fully memorized their text.

(Continues on page 61)

Mr. Mano is a longtime contributor to NR.

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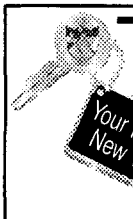

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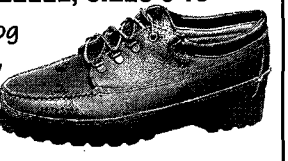

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MANO

(Continued from page 59)

To avoid calling the prompter for a line —which would disrupt both emotional rhythm and technical business—actors improvise. "I let my mind 'scat' in free association," Laurie told me. "I take the first words that will advance the rehearsal process, even if they're inexact. I suppose I do the same thing in life: I can't verbalize fast enough, can't remember my 'lines,' so I extemporize. I just take the bullet by the horns."

Metaphor-making is a subliminal enterprise. For both poet and scientist the breakthrough insight ("eureka moment") will unveil itself most readily where conscious thought has first been distracted by some trivial rumination. I, for example, play solitaire or random dice games while I write. These occupy my intellect in a superficial way—and, during moments of inattention, the metaphor-loaded subconscious can surface. So dialogue in a play, like my dice and solitaire, will allow Laurie to "scat" through her subliminal mind while rehearsing—and help create those peculiar locutions of the portmanteau.

Laurie is doing, in fact, what any decent poet would do: she takes worn-out language and reupholsters it with new verbal stuff. No cliché can escape her improving imagination. When angry she might say, "Don't get my shackles up." (And you feel the metal weight of her indignation.) Or, about the crocodile, "It had a gaping yaw." (Was deep and wide and also, apparently, yawed from side to side.) Some sculptor friend was doing "a bust of" Richard Nixon's head. An actor "looked good behind the camera." And she once saw policemen putting "cufflinks" on a mugger. (You now know why law enforcement has been so expensive.)

Laurie, possibly because she doesn't "hear" her strange verbal life as it is spoken aloud, remains somewhat distant from, if amused by, the phenomenon. I am more than that: I am amazed and made full of delight. Language evolves in my living room. "I guess," Laurie conceded, "I am a landmine for that kind of thing. Well, another milestone around my neck."

And that's not just blue air. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience, edited by Jonathan D. Sarna and David G. Dalin (Notre Dame, 368 pp., $40)

HAVING experienced persecution at the hands of Christians throughout their history, Jews are naturally sensitive to the separation of church and state. That there should be a "wall of separation" became something of a mantra among Jewish groups in this country in the years following World War II, and the Supreme Court eventually ruled Bible reading, prayer, and other forms of religious expression in public education unconstitutional. In this trail-blazing source book going from colonial days to the present time, Professors Sarna and Dalin argue that, in fact, Jews have been more diverse in their views on this subject than is widely acknowledged. They have sought for much of their history religious equality rather than the total removal of religion from the public arena. The authors present a range of primary source materials along with a balanced commentary on how Jewish leaders and organizations have responded to Sunday "blue laws," prayer in schools, the display of menorahs alongside Christian symbols on public property, and many other subjects. With this important book, the authors set the terms of the new debate within the Jewish community on the current understanding of church–state relations.

—MURRAY FRIEDMAN

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ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

Baghdad Pact, 24 Hours Later

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 24

Concerning the Baghdad Pact, a few observations:

1. Is it so, as ventured by one broadcaster on the scene, that Saddam is bigger today than he was yesterday? From one perspective it is very difficult to maintain this. Saddam looked at us and said, No. We looked at him and said, Yes. The Yeses prevail. If it is to be as publicized, the UN team will begin inspecting those redoubts to which Saddam denied it access. That would appear to be a clear victory for the United States.

But here we get into the real maze. All along we need to remind ourselves, difficult though it is to do since it affronts reality, that Saddam has said there is nothing there that is hidden, in all those "suspected" sites.

Let us, for the sake of convenience, accept the figure of eight (8) suspected sites which we may now inspect provided the UN team headed up by Mr. Richard Butler permits this and that diplomat to string along. The question remains: Will they find the poisons there, in the suspected sites?

Addressing the nation at the Ohio State University Town Hall meeting, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright flatly charged ten days ago that the inspection team had uncovered and destroyed more of those deadly weapons than were demolished during the entire Gulf War. Then Secretary of Defense William Cohen said that estimates of existing stockpiles in Iraq are anywhere from fifty to two hundred tons. It is very hard to believe that Saddam is going to let the UN Special Commission bob up with a few dozen gallons of anthrax to present to Christiane Amanpour at noon on Saturday. We must suppose that the stuff isn't in fact there. If we do not find it, we are driven to consider the only two alternatives. The first, that we were nuts to say it was there at all. The second, that the poisons are indeed in Iraq but not in one of those eight suspected sites.

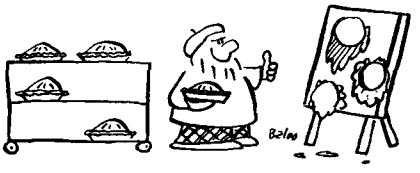
In order for the materials for chemical and biological warfare to hoist Saddam onto the commanding geopolitical heights he wants to occupy, his neighbors, and indeed the world, have to know that he has them. The existence of such an inventory creates a (regional) superpower. Israel's possession of an atomic weapon is absolutely critical to its poise. The possession of that weapon would be of little political use to Israel if it weren't known that the weapon was there.

So Saddam has a problem. If the Unscom team comes up with the poison, Saddam loses face. If, a year from now, his neighbors are convinced that there are no such reserves in the aggressive arsenal of Iraq, then Saddam loses much of his power to terrorize.

2. It is comforting that Saddam has a rudimentary sense of the relative superiority of peace over war. If Hitler had known that five years after he marched into Poland he would be putting a pistol to his head and pulling the trigger, one must suppose that he'd have thought better of initiating a world war. The consequences of what the Pentagon had lined up for Iraq would almost certainly not have driven Saddam to suicide, but life would have been emptier for him. Just for instance, the loss of those splendid palaces would have made him considerably less regal. If he had had to take over a Holiday Inn as headquarters, he almost certainly would have thought himself deprived. His concessions to Secretary General Kofi Annan were a notch on the belt of military power.

3. The wild approval of Saddam portrayed on television is the gloomiest part of the diplomatic panoply. A country to be loved must be lovely, Burke taught us. Well, some of us like to think that, when all is said and done, the United States is a pretty lovely country. But it is hard to love a superpower, so forget that.

But Saddam's country is about as ugly as countries can possibly get. Saddam has engaged in genocide against the Kurds. He provoked an eight-year war against Iran that cost a million casualties. He invaded Kuwait and was chased out in an ignominious military encounter with the United States. He tried to destroy the oil reserves of Kuwait by setting fire to several hundred oil wells and contaminating the seas for hundreds of miles around. He has tortured and killed intimates and subintimates by the hundreds and thousands . . . And for this man's country, they are cheering in Egypt and Jordan and Syria. Can the hatred of Israel so obsess a people as to derange all their faculties? Could a hatred of Israel cause me to love Picasso and hate Bach? On this one your servant surrenders: one does not know what to say. □



Assassinate You-Know-Who?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 13

Certain things, most sensible people will agree, should not be spoken about, and sometimes even deception is in order. Some years ago I testified as a friendly witness to a defendant in a civil lawsuit. It was strange, bizarre stuff. Joe McGinniss, the author of *Fatal Vision*, was being sued by Dr. Jeffrey MacDonald. There were special problems posed in the proceedings, because the plaintiff was in prison for life for murdering his pregnant wife and two daughters. Even so, he had managed to get a judicial hearing, charging that McGinniss had deceived him when accumulating the research for his book. The defense argued that the author could legitimately conceal his own opinions in order to expedite his research. I concurred.

"So you believe in lying!" the plaintiff's lawyer exclaimed exultantly, holding a triumphant hand up in front of the 12 jurors. I replied that the word "lying" had to be appraised according to the context. "If my wife says, Am I still the most beautiful woman in the world? I don't think I have exactly 'lied' in saying Yes." . . . The jury divided on the issue, and one wonders how it would come up on a proceeding in which the President was a defendant on the question, Did he lie when he said that a primary purpose in any campaign against Iraq was not the assassination of Saddam Hussein?

On November 20, 1975, a Senate investigating committee headed by Sen. Frank Church filed its Report on Assassination. Committee members included such heavyweights as Sens. Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, Howard Baker, and Barry Goldwater. The Report: "We have found concrete evidence of at least eight plots involving the CIA to assassinate Fidel Castro from 1960 to 1965."

President Kennedy wasn't around to deny it. Camelot historians take the posi-

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tion that he didn't know about the eight plots to assassinate Castro. Oh yes, and Bobby Kennedy didn't know about them either—amazing the independence of executive departments: you can try to kill a foreign leader eight different times and the Commander-in-Chief knows nothing about it.

The point here is that the above was merely one more re-enactment of a classic covenant between the prince and his agent, bent on missions of a certain kind. That understanding is that no connection between the two will ever be recorded. A hypothetical scene I once described, in attempting to argue the proposition that assassination is a moral art form: Suppose that the half-crazed Colonel Idi Amin, when he was the leader of Uganda, had acquired a nuclear bomb and was now at Entebbe airfield to dispatch an airplane with instructions to drop it on Tel Aviv. In the scenario, a CIA agent is hidden one hundred yards away with a 30-caliber rifle and a radio. "I have Colonel Amin in my cross hairs. Do I pull the trigger?" The man in the White House says, "Yes, but whether you're caught or not caught, I knew nothing about it."

After the Church Report was filed, President Ford issued an executive order forswearing assassination as a legitimate instrument of foreign policy, and it is quite right that he should have done so, and all leaders should forswear assassinations. But—need we say more?

Headline in the *International Herald Tribune*: "The Unanswered Question about Iraq: What to Do about Saddam?" The story carries news of the security seminar conducted in Munich to help Secretary of Defense Cohen brush up on his arguments before arriving in Moscow. Manifestly, whatever preparation he made didn't get him very far with Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev on the matter of using force against Saddam. But the *Tribune* story replayed the commentary at the seminar of Richard Perle, formerly with the Reagan Administration, who said he liked to think he wasn't the only person in the room who hoped that no diplomatic solution to the problem of Saddam would be found. If you want to, you can read that as Aesopian language for: Get Saddam. Mr. Perle's published views on the Iraq situation call for a total effort based on enlivening the Iraqi opposition. With a view to what? To ending the career of Saddam, which is a genteel way of saying, To end the life of Saddam.

Those who balk at what they are tempted to denounce as moral circumlocution are generally correct. In the last analysis, such liberties can be defended only in airtight moral situations. It would have been good, no, if somebody had shot Hitler? Never mind who put him up to it. □

Enoch Powell's Controversial Ending

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 17

It is not widely noticed in America, let alone resented, that a couple of conspicuous British divines protested mightily that the body of Enoch Powell would rest for one day in Westminster Abbey. The decision to place him there wasn't an Act of Parliament confirmed by the House of Lords confirmed by the Crown. It was as straightforward as that he had been a warden of St. Margaret's Church, which is an appendage of Westminster Abbey, and the conventional arrangements have always been just that simple: worship at St. Margaret's and earn a day at Westminster Abbey before you go underground.

But of course the death of Mr. Powell was an opportunity for bishops too busy to mourn the dead to engage in a little multiculturalism. "Enoch Powell gave a certificate of respectability to white racist views which otherwise decent people were ashamed to acknowledge," said the Bishop of Croydon. His reference was to a speech by Enoch Powell in 1968, dubbed the "Rivers of Blood" speech. We should give that speech a little more perspective.

What Powell said that had political heft was that someone carrying a British passport ought no longer to assume that he had an inalienable right to immigrate to the British Isles. There was indeed some sense of it, when the talk was given, that Great Britain was going back on a trust: the assumption, for generations, had been that a resident of any country in the Empire was, in effect, British-born. "What that would mean," Mr. Powell explained on a *Firing Line* program, "is that several hundred million people would have a right of entry into the British Isles." Manifestly, the right of entry had to graduate from civil to ceremonial application; and indeed Parliament in due course made the necessary clarification.

But the issue was complicated by inflammatory predictions. Powell's speech projected that "in 15 or 20 years' time the black man will have the whip hand over the white man." The current *Economist* comments that the projection proved to be "a nonsense. Today, non-whites, lumped together in official statistics as 'ethnic minorities,' amount to only 6 per cent of the population." The editors neatly finessed an opportunity to pass judgment on whether, if Powell's prediction had proved correct, England would have suffered.

The Bishop of Croydon (there were others, including the former Archbishop of Canterbury) feels the constraint similarly felt so widely in the United States, where any talk about immigration reform, so clearly needed, runs into multiculturalists who espy anti-black or anti-Hispanic prejudice in proposals for restriction, or libertarians who espy a statist assault on freedom of movement. Enoch Powell was prepared to evaluate the cultural level of ten thousand Indians in 1968 and ten thousand Brits in the same year and insist that disparities in education and culture and tradition made them less than entirely, or immediately, fungible. He was right, but to make that point was so risky as probably to have cost him the political ascendancy he had reason to expect.

Because he was one of the truly brilliant political figures in modern British history. A classicist profoundly learned, a man of withering intelligence who at age seventy, for the sake of research he was engaged in, mastered Hebrew. He resigned from the Tory Party because of his dissatisfaction with Tory leader Edward Heath (who declined to mourn his death last week), and took a seat with the Unionist Party in Ireland. Through it all he opposed Europeanism and preached the value of the free-market economy, supporting the reforms of Mrs. Thatcher, who, notwithstanding, denied Powell the hereditary seat in the House of Lords he was said to covet. This deprivation had a domestic impact on his wife. "Pamela was especially keen for her husband to find employment," an observer reported in the London *Times*. " 'She was fed up with him mooching around the house,' says a friend. 'Pam married him in sickness and in health, but not for lunch.' "

Amusing, but not really apt for someone never idle, busy with research on the Bible, which at a large dinner party in London a few years ago he described privately to his host as fulfilling a lifelong ambition. He had been to Russia, and when he addressed the assembly from the lectern he said that everywhere he went in Russia he heard three words, "*Ivan bil pravi*." He spoke about his long fight for a free market and for the need for a country to control its own borders and against Europeanization. What was the translation of those words he heard spoken everywhere? He gave his tight smile, "Why," he said, "that's Russian for 'Enoch Was Right.' " Evidently the Russians know things a lot of British bishops don't know. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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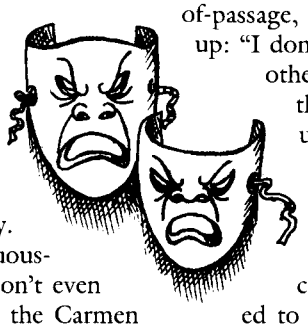
THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

AMERICA has no peer when it comes to contradictions but we surpassed ourselves with our recent creation of what has to be the last of the red-hot oxymorons: the helpless, insecure femme fatale who never grew up. Delilah is now a poor kid who needs counseling.

Our sensuality is sealed under an adult-proof cap and any attempt to pry it off leads to failure and frustration. Monica Lewinsky's porn version of spin-the-bottle moved one columnist to quote wistfully from Ben Franklin's letter in praise of sex with older women, but nowadays that means Mary Kay LeTourneau, the 36-year-old Seattle grade-school teacher who gave herself to her 13-year-old pupil and had his baby. Authentic female voluptuousness is so scarce that we don't even have anybody who can do the Carmen number right. If you want a fiery temptress with a knife in her stocking, you have to make do with Diane Zamora, identified in news stories as "the diminutive former midshipman."



It all goes back to Bill Clinton's arrested development. If you want an 'R' Us, he's it. In an earlier column on the White House sex scandal I predicted that Monica Lewinsky will never be called a "fellatrix" because Americans do not love language, but I see now that I was wrong. Why should we take up a hard-edged Latinate word when "oral" connotes children fixated on perfect safety and security? I take it all back: "oral sex" is the perfect description for this act, in this place, at this time. Say it to yourself and you can hear the gurgle of a contented thumbsucker and the promise of "comfort food": sodomy as macaroni-and-cheese.

Reading matter? Any adult deeply moved by *Leaves of Grass* has an assy-gassy mind ruled by an achy-breaky heart. Walt Whitman belongs to the interlude Clinton admirers call "youthful idealism" and do their best to stretch into an eon. This is when Ravel's "Bolero" sounds wanton instead of monotonous, when *Lady Chatterly's Lover* comes across as spontaneously free instead of unconsciously funny, when Mary Queen of Scots is a romantic heroine instead of a self-destructive idiot. *Leaves of Grass* is a State of the Union message in verse: unstanched puerile prattle with every scheme but a rhyme scheme.

The return of the gifts was pure rite-of-passage, the teen steadys breaking up: "I don't think we should see each other anymore," the thumb through a stack of 45 rpms, unwrapping the adhesive tape from the too-large class ring. Mike McCurry's observation that this could, after all, be a "very complicated story" only added to the Ricky Nelsonness of it all. Parting steadys can never remember whose records are whose or agree on what to do about birthday presents. I half-expected the next trumpet fanfare of "CNN Breaking News" to open on Clinton toeing the dirt and mumbling, "I want you to have it."

White House infantilism is so relentless that whenever someone accidentally strikes a note of maturity it produces sudden weird images and a kind of out-of-sync joy. Clinton's grim reference to "that woman" rescued the femme fatale from therapy and put her back before a Middle European firing squad. That word "compromising" transferred her to the Old Bailey, and "hatpins" became weapons of female self-defense for a few puzzling seconds, until I realized that what I call a hatpin is unknown to Monica, who has taken the Fellatrix Oath: First, do no harm.

What turns the scandal into a primal bog of arrested development is Clinton's selfish sexual preference. It's on a par with the innocent selfishness of an infant whose world is its wants, the blind selfishness of a fetus battening on its host. I can't understand why a woman would tolerate such one-sidedness. Back in my wild youth, men were so solicitous of female pleasure. "Do you like this? . . . Does that feel good? . . . Here? . . . There?" They went on and on, sometimes irritatingly so, but their hearts were in the right place even if some other things weren't. No man ever asked me to service him as an isolated act, but evidently today's men expect it—or they will now.

This is what feminists call liberation, but not all of them are playing the indulgent mother to our ageless P. One of them—the one that too many conservatives love to hate—laid into him like Carrie Nation. Interviewed in England by the *Guardian*, the underappreciated Andrea Dworkin said:

"Bill Clinton's fixation on oral sex [is] the most fetishistic, heartless, cold sexual exchange that one could imagine. . . . The second issue that concerns me is what Hillary Clinton is doing, which I think is appalling. She is covering up for a man who has a history of exploiting women. It's pathetic. She should pack her bags and leave."

Here comes the best part: "I have a modest proposal. It will probably bring the FBI to my door. But I think that Hillary should shoot Bill and then President Gore should pardon her."

WHEN Clinton's post-scandal approval ratings soared the Left saw blasé sophistication and the Right saw moral corruption, but Americans are neither sophisticated nor corrupt, just childish and democratic. What they really approve of in Clinton's behavior is the way he takes the adult out of adultery and the in out of sin. If he had kept a soignée thirtyish mistress and visited her discreetly the whole country would have felt threatened. Mistresses are for kings and discretion is elitist by definition, but love on the rope line suggests a limitless participation that reduces adultery to the minor crime of tumescence in office.

To prevent his kindergarten from swelling beyond the acceptable class size that concerns him in tranquil moments, he ought to reconsider a woman he met a few years ago: the five-hundred-year-old Peruvian mummy he said he'd like to date.

She might not be bad if he put his mind to it. As Agatha Christie said: "An archeologist is the best husband any woman can have. The older she gets, the more he is interested in her." □

Miss King is the author of The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

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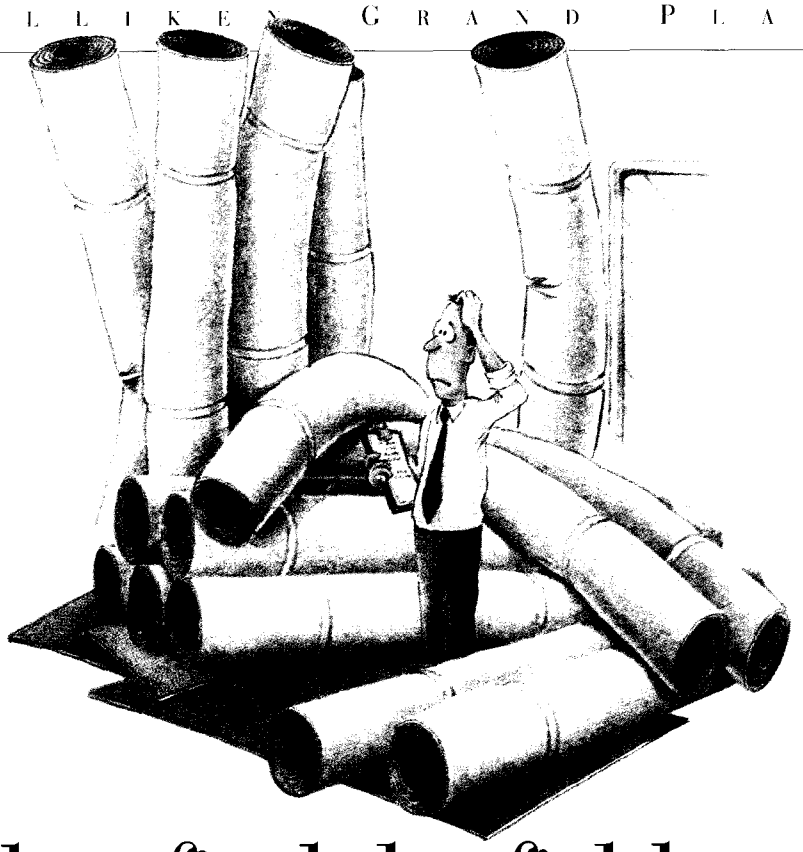

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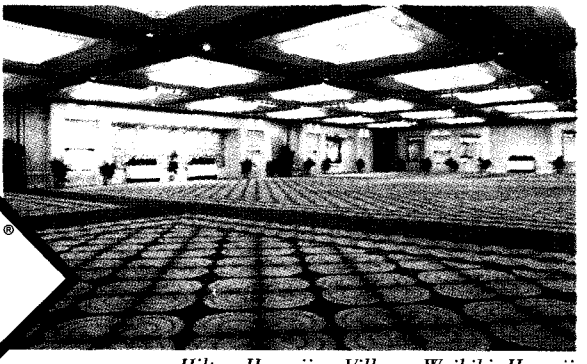

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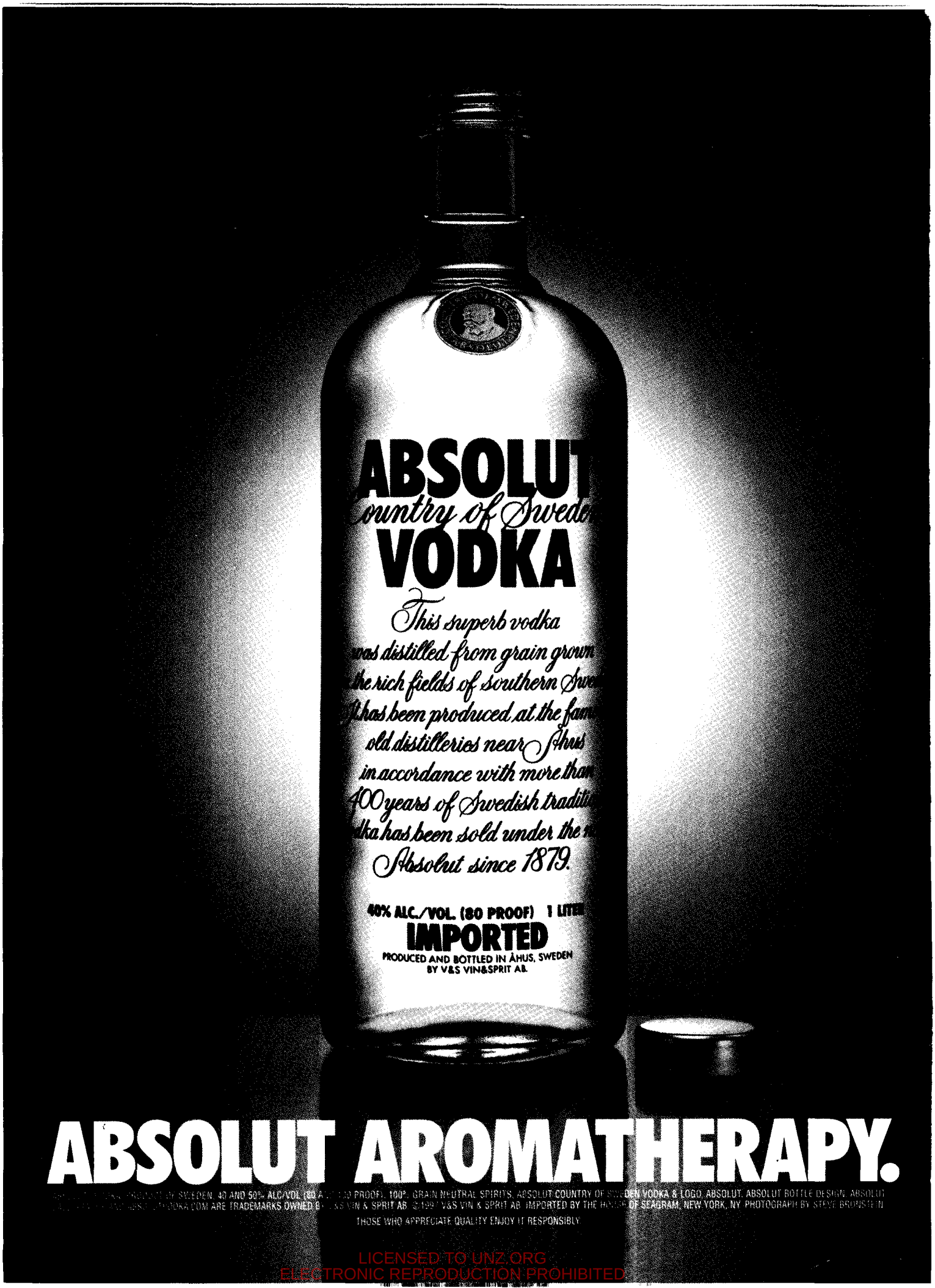
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